



THE WALKING DEAD

TM 31

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IMAGE COMICS PRESENTS

THE WALKING

DEAD™

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CHARLIE ADLARD

Penciler, Inker, Cover

CLIFF RATHBURN

Gray Tones, Cover Colors, Back Cover

RUS WOOTON

Letterer

Previously:

Trapped in Woodbury, a town a few miles from the prison they've called home, Rick, Glenn and Michonne are experiencing the worst time of their lives. How much longer will they last?

For Image Comics



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HEY, MARTINEZ!

WHAT DO YOU WANT? MY SHIFT AIN'T OVER FOR ANOTHER COUPLE HOURS.



WELL, I'M HERE TO RELIEVE YOU SO I GUESS YOU'RE GETTING AN EARLY BREAK.

BOSS MAN WANTS TO SEE YOU.



SHIT.

WHAT THE HELL DOES HE WANT?



LIKE HE'S GOING TO TELL ME.

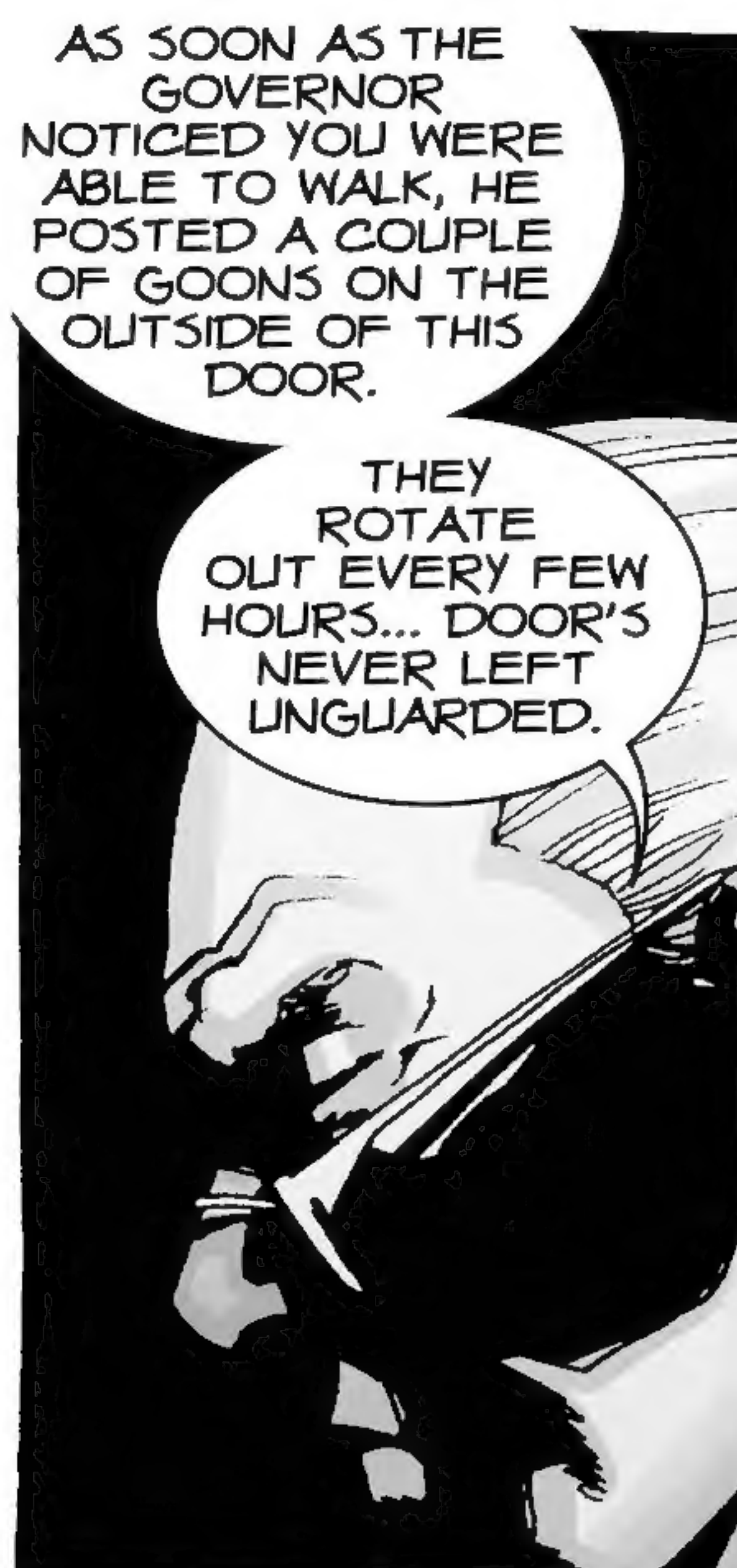
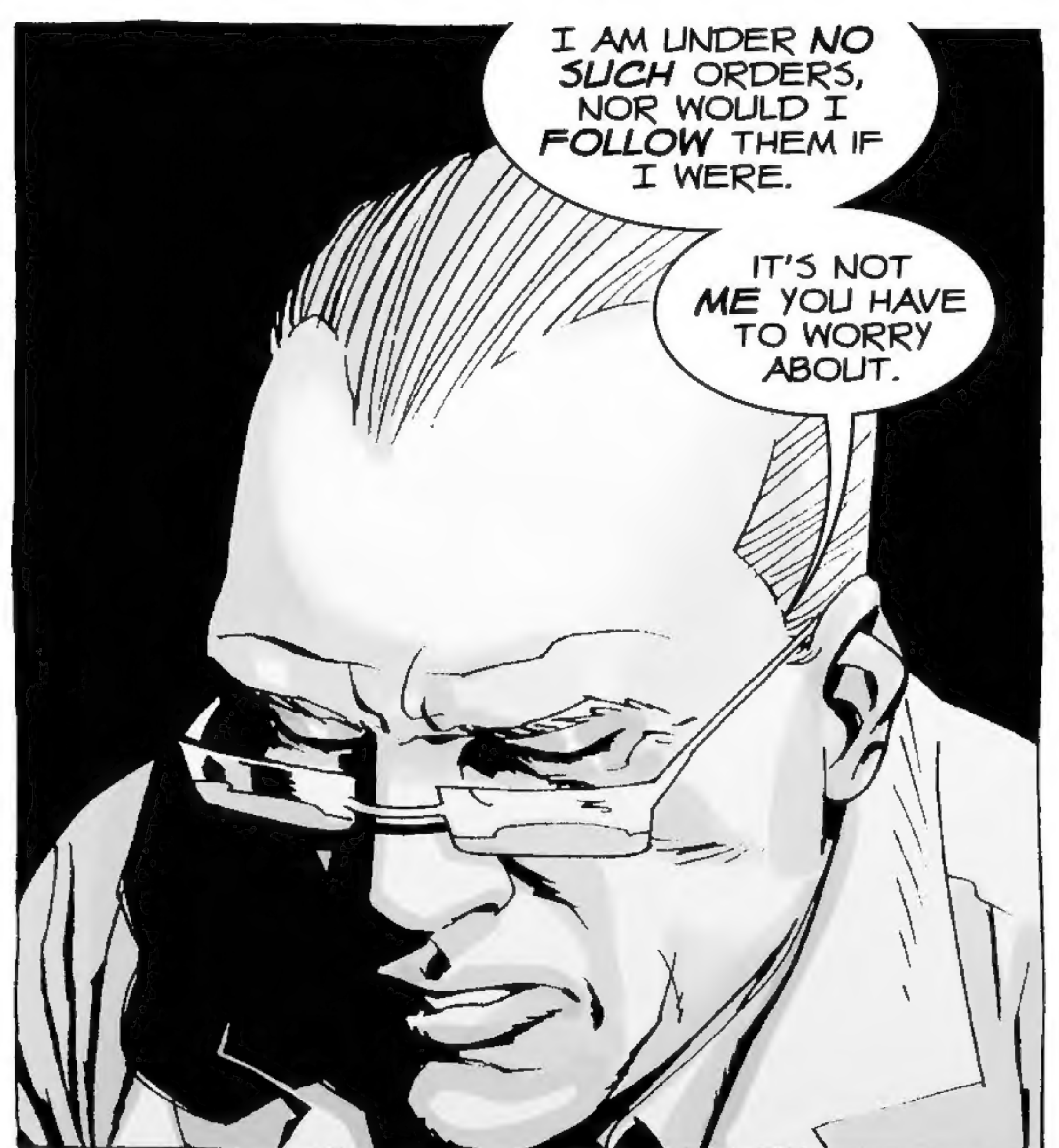
STAY ALERT UP THERE. IT'S BEEN QUIET TODAY... BUT THAT USUALLY NEVER LASTS.



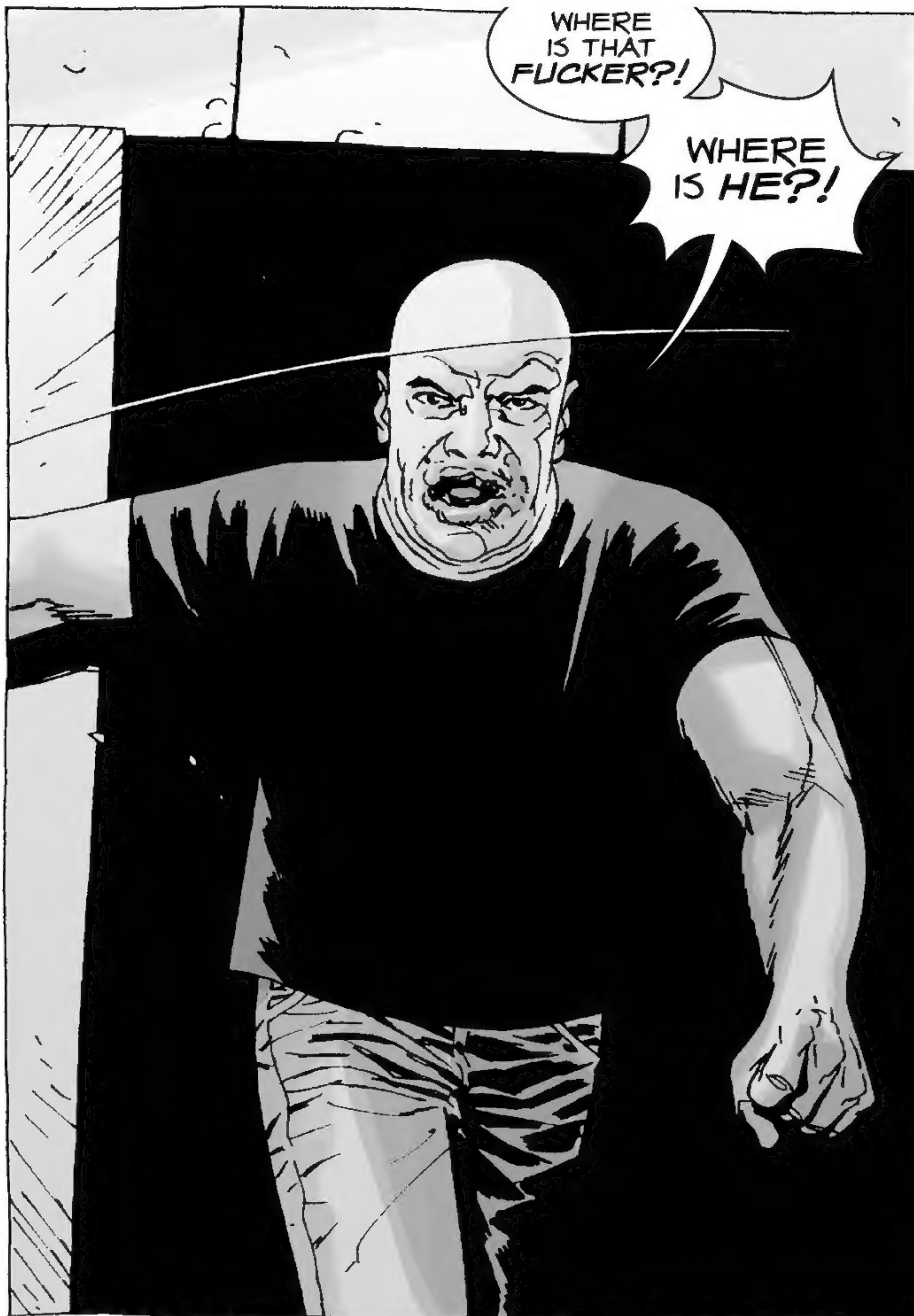
YOU GOING TO WATCH THE FIGHT TODAY?

LET'S SEE WHAT THE GOVERNOR WANTS TO SEE ME ABOUT FIRST...

ONE THING AT A TIME.







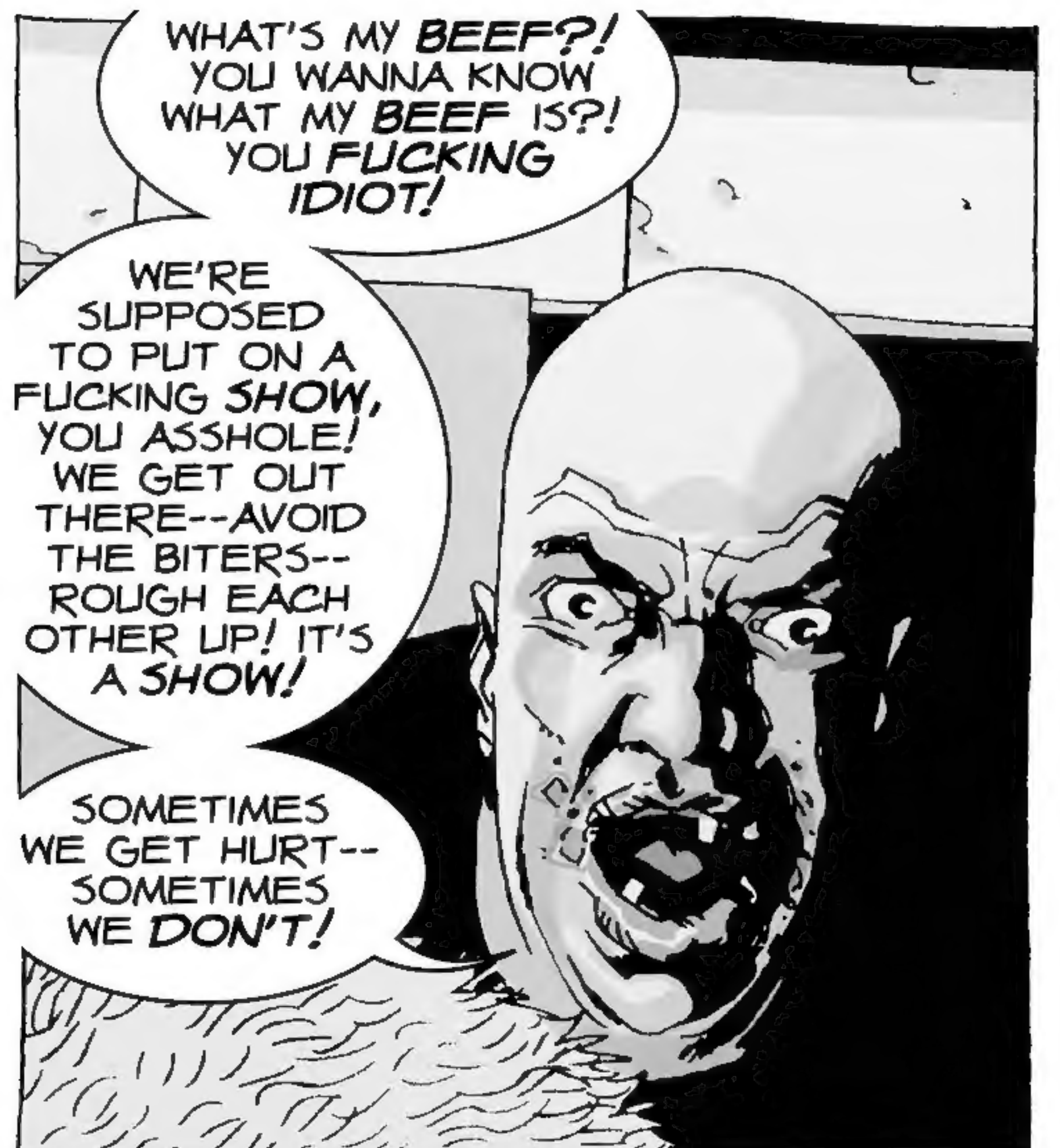
WHERE IS THAT **FUCKER?!!**

WHERE IS **HE?!!**



WHOA, EUGENE. WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL?

YOU'RE GETTING A REMATCH! WHAT'S YOUR BEEF?!



WHAT'S MY **BEEF?!!** YOU WANNA KNOW WHAT MY **BEEF** IS?! YOU **FUCKING IDIOT!**

WE'RE SUPPOSED TO PUT ON A **FUCKING SHOW**, YOU ASSHOLE! WE GET OUT THERE--AVOID THE BITERS--ROUGH EACH OTHER UP! IT'S A **SHOW!**

SOMETIMES WE GET HURT--SOMETIMES WE **DON'T!**



IT'S ALWAYS JUST A **CRACKED RIB--OR** SOME BUSTED **KNUCKLES!!** NEVER SOMETHING PERMANENT!

YOU KNOCKED OUT MY **FUCKING TEETH**, YOU ASSHOLE!

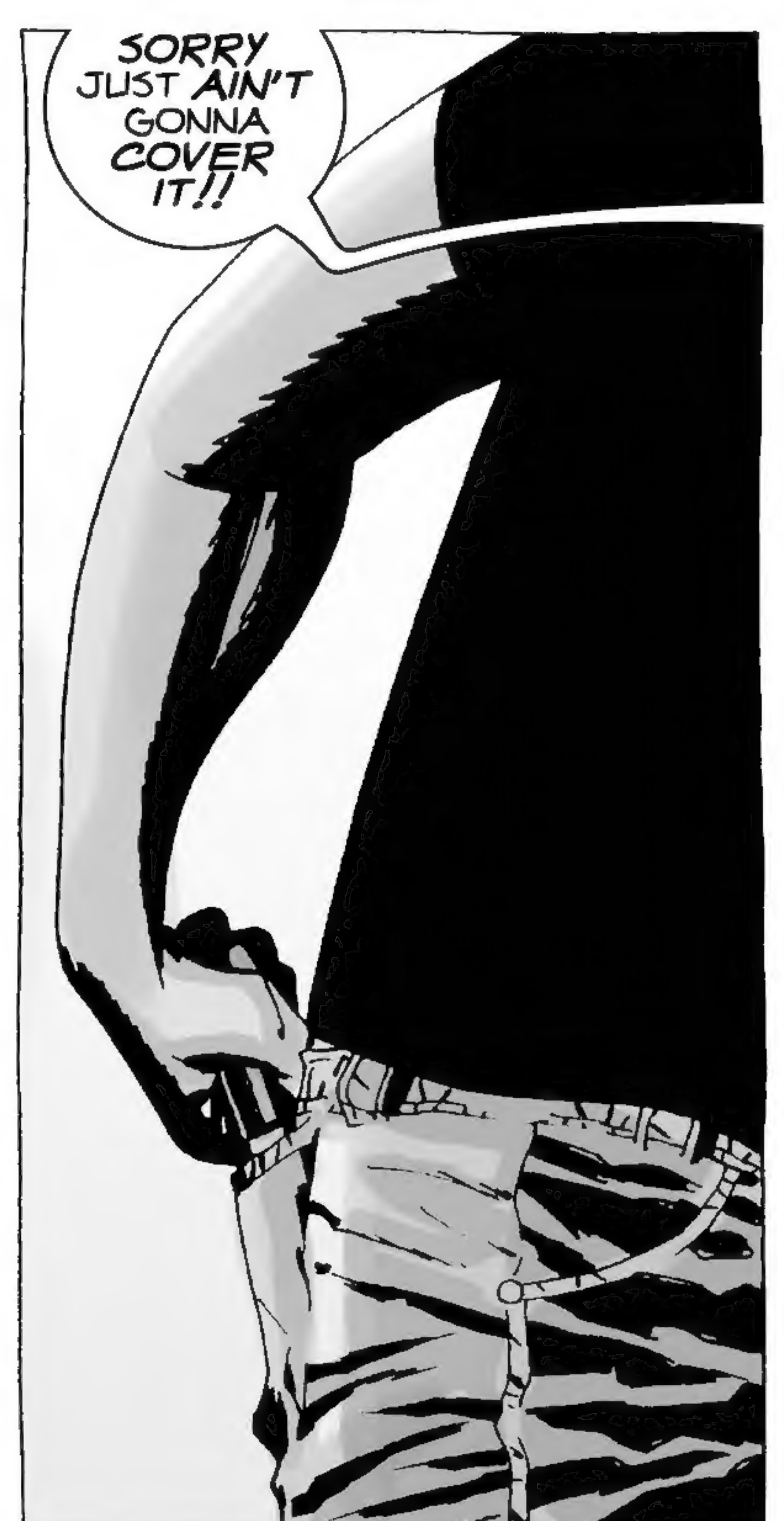
I CAN'T GET THOSE **FIXED!** I CAN'T **REPLACE** THEM! I'M **FUCKING TOOTHLESS** NOW!!

HEY, MAN--I DIDN'T MEAN--

GUYS, PLEASE...



SORRY ABOUT THAT, MAN. I GOT A LITTLE CARRIED AWAY.



SORRY JUST AIN'T GONNA COVER IT!!





RIGHT, YOU'RE GOING TO BITE ME AND THEN WHAT? HOW DO YOU THINK YOU COULD GET OUT OF HERE? YOU REALLY SHOULD JUST STOP STRUGGLING. THINGS WOULD BE SO MUCH EASIER ON YOU.

BESIDES, LAST TIME YOU ALMOST BROKE YOUR WRISTS. WE DON'T WANT THAT DO WE?

SO FOR YOUR SAKE, I'D APPRECIATE IT IF YOU'D JUST GIVE IT A REST... BUT ENOUGH ABOUT THAT.

WE'VE GOT A BIT OF A PROBLEM.

WELL, YOU'VE GOT A **HUGE** PROBLEM, AND DEPENDING ON YOUR DEFINITION, I'VE GOT PLENTY OF "PROBLEMS," BUT WHAT I MEAN IS... I'VE GOT A **NEW** PROBLEM AND I NEED YOUR **HELP**.



I'VE GOT A FIGHT TODAY IN THE ARENA-- A **BIG ONE**--A LOT OF PEOPLE ARE SUPPOSED TO BE COMING... AND I JUST LOST A FIGHTER.

I NEED A REPLACEMENT-- AND I WANT IT TO BE **YOU**.

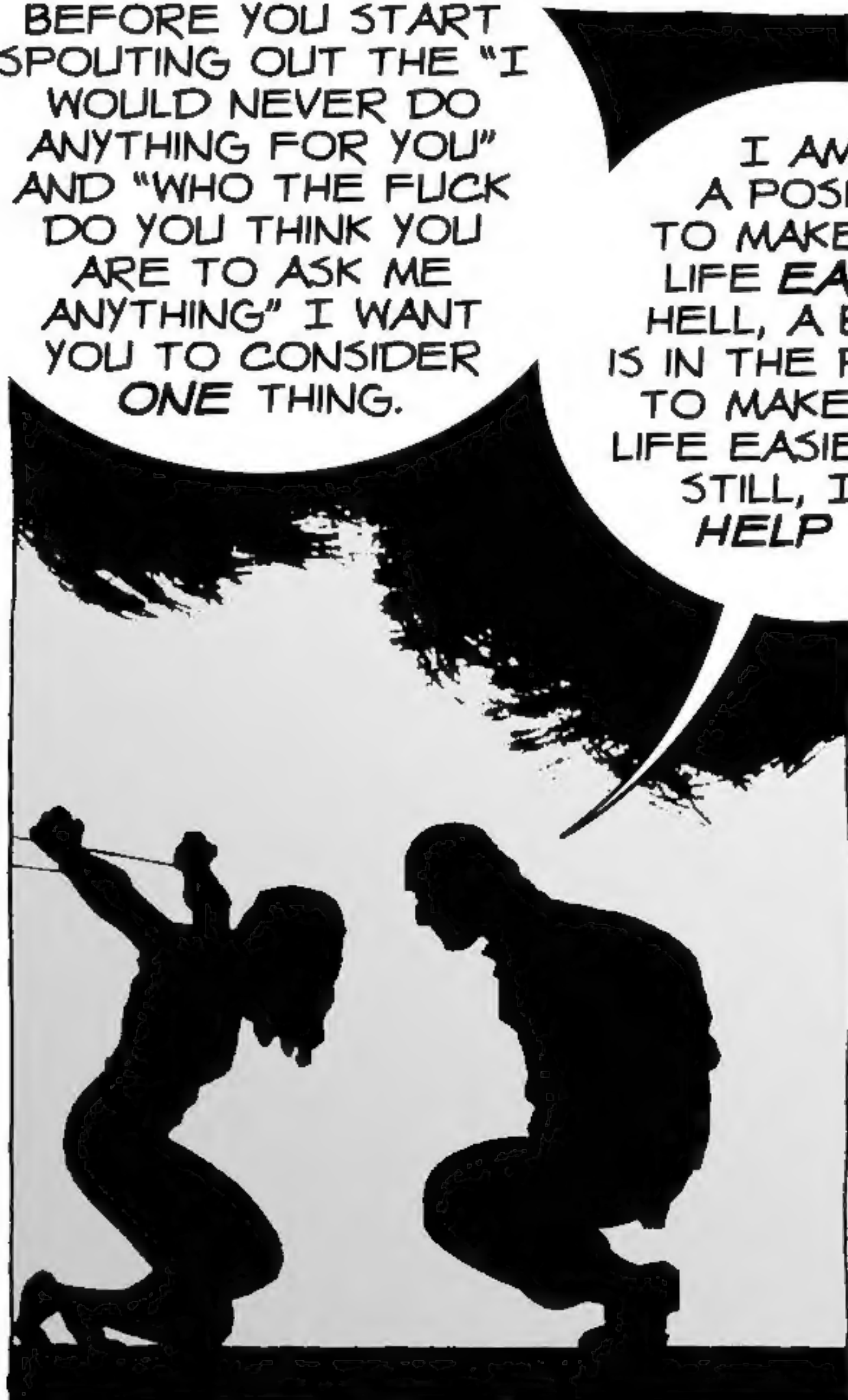


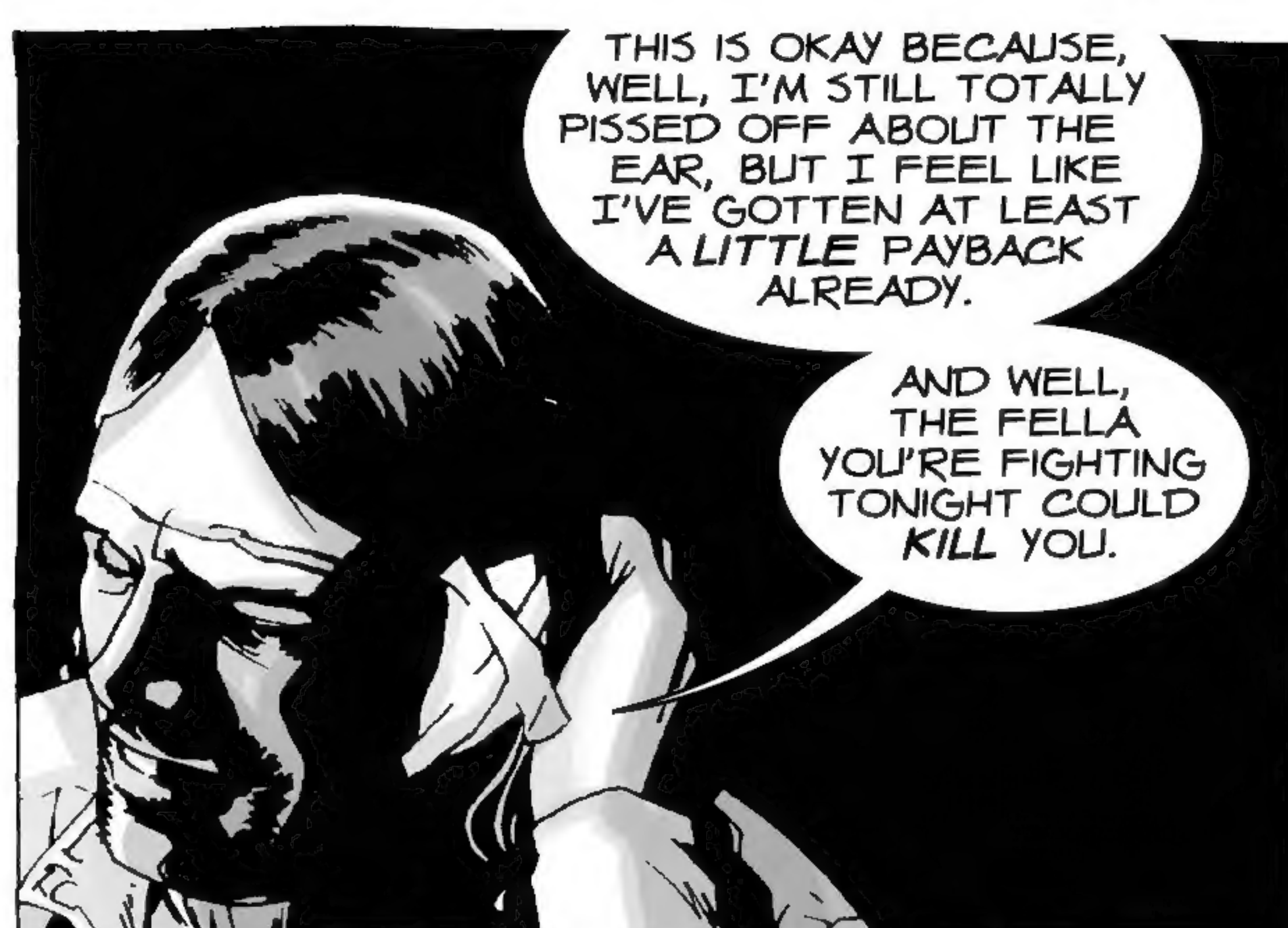
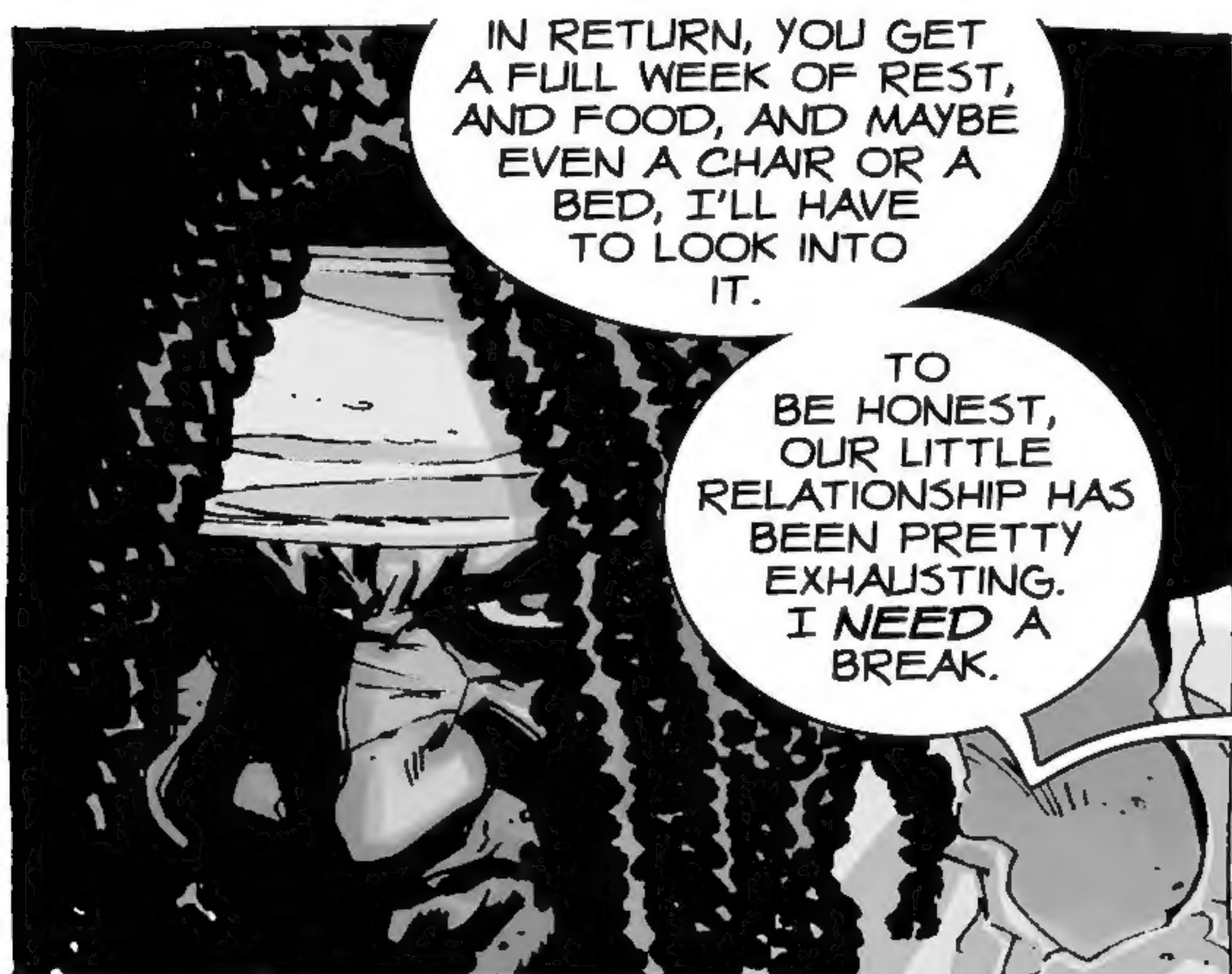
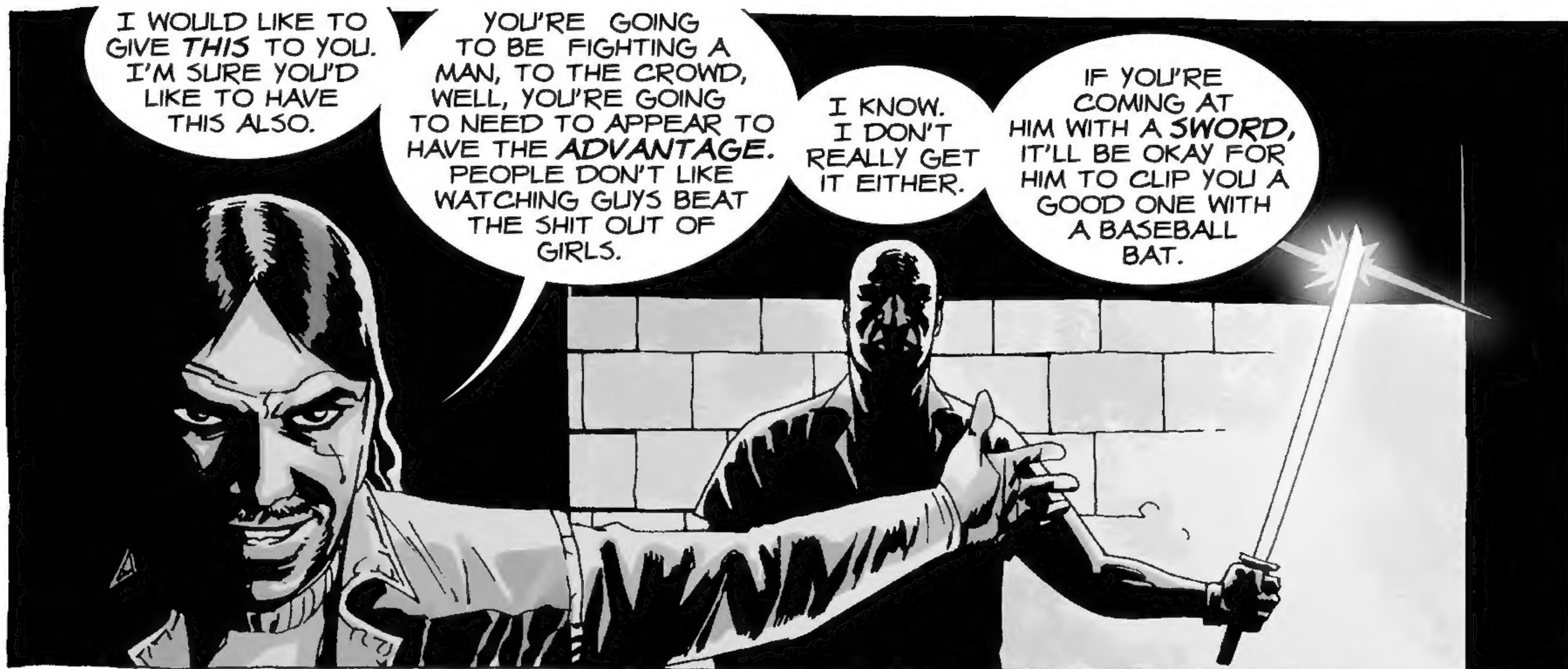
BEFORE YOU START SPOUTING OUT THE "I WOULD NEVER DO ANYTHING FOR YOU" AND "WHO THE FUCK DO YOU THINK YOU ARE TO ASK ME ANYTHING" I WANT YOU TO CONSIDER **ONE** THING.

I AM IN A POSITION TO MAKE YOUR LIFE **EASIER**. HELL, A BULLET IS IN THE POSITION TO MAKE **YOUR** LIFE EASIER... BUT STILL, I CAN **HELP** YOU.

I DON'T WANT YOU TO LOSE SIGHT OF THAT.

BRUCE!







SHUT UP! SHUT
THE FUCK UP!
YOU HANDED ME TO
THAT PSYCHO!
YOU FUCKING
DID THIS!

WHOA--
HEY!



STOP
IT!

STOP
IT, RIGHT
FUCKING
NOW!



COME ON,
MARTINEZ.
YOU NEED TO
LEAVE.

DON'T WORRY
ABOUT HIM. WHAT
DID YOU WANT?
YOU WERE
LOOKING FOR
ME?

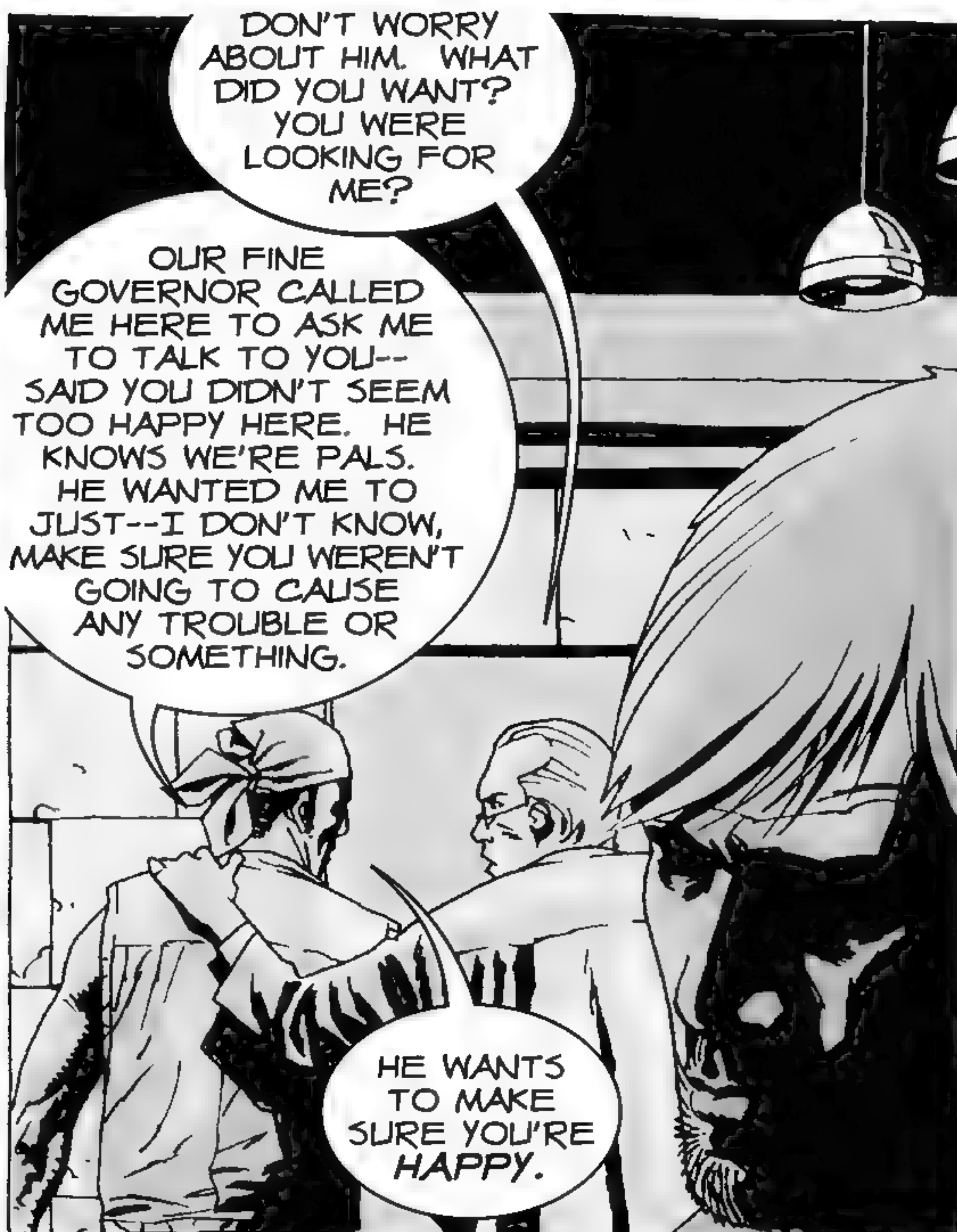
OUR FINE
GOVERNOR CALLED
ME HERE TO ASK ME
TO TALK TO YOU--
SAID YOU DIDN'T SEEM
TOO HAPPY HERE. HE
KNOWS WE'RE PALS.
HE WANTED ME TO
JUST--I DON'T KNOW,
MAKE SURE YOU WEREN'T
GOING TO CAUSE
ANY TROUBLE OR
SOMETHING.

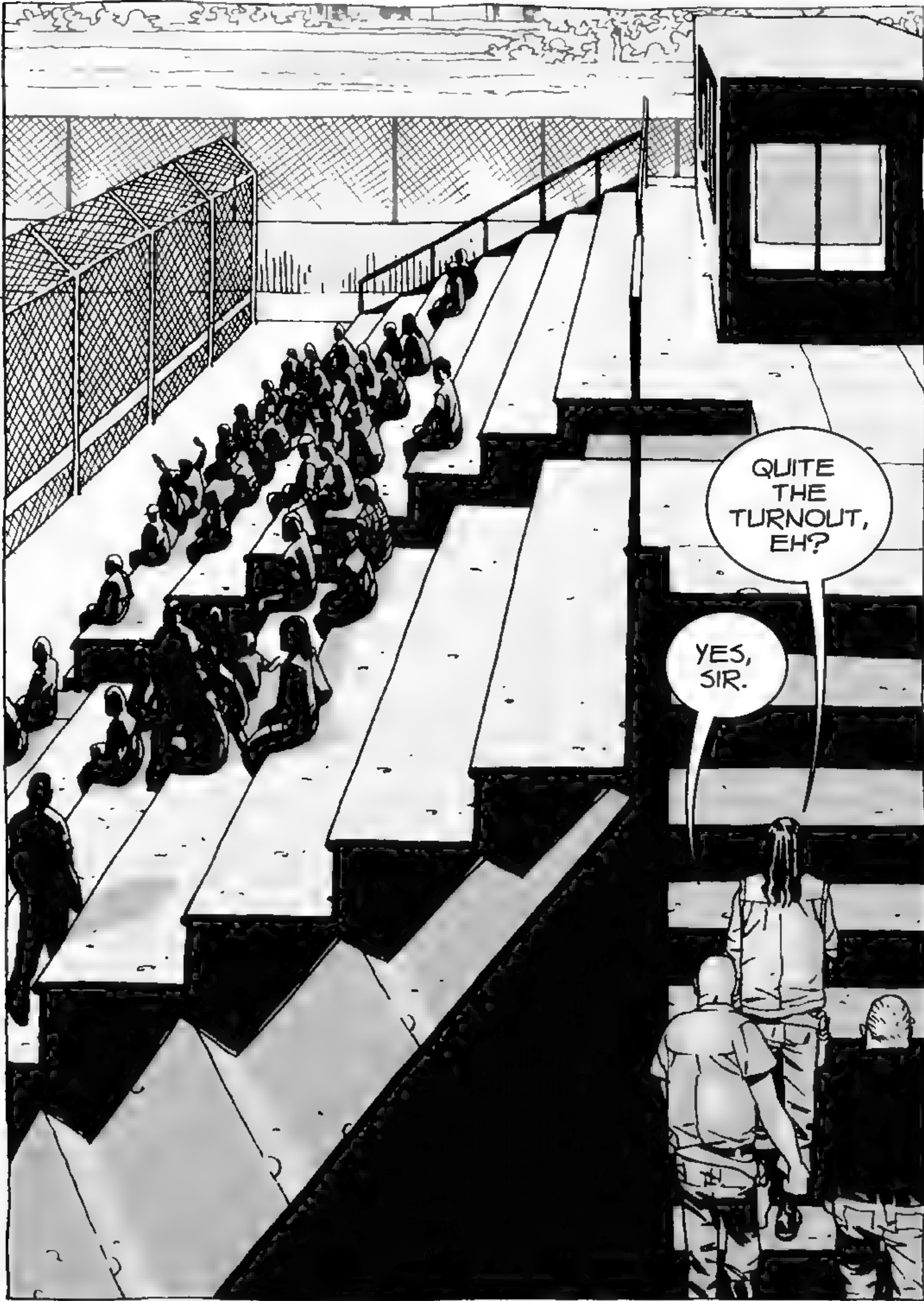
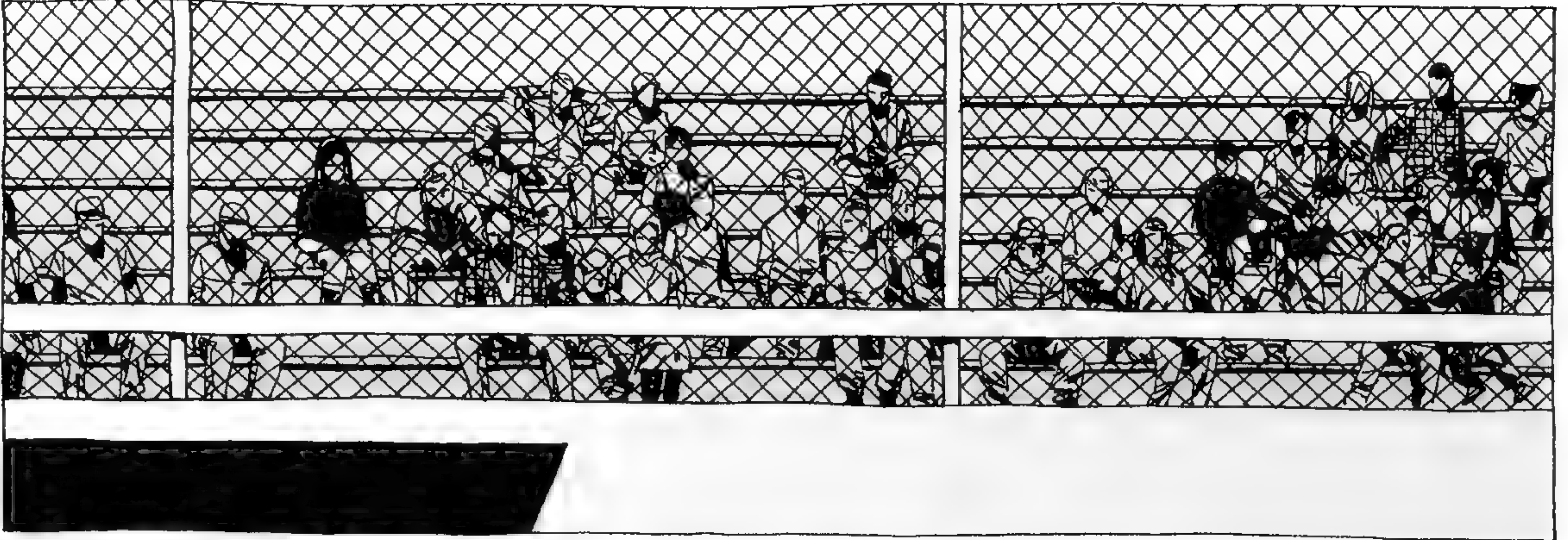
HE WANTS
TO MAKE
SURE YOU'RE
HAPPY.

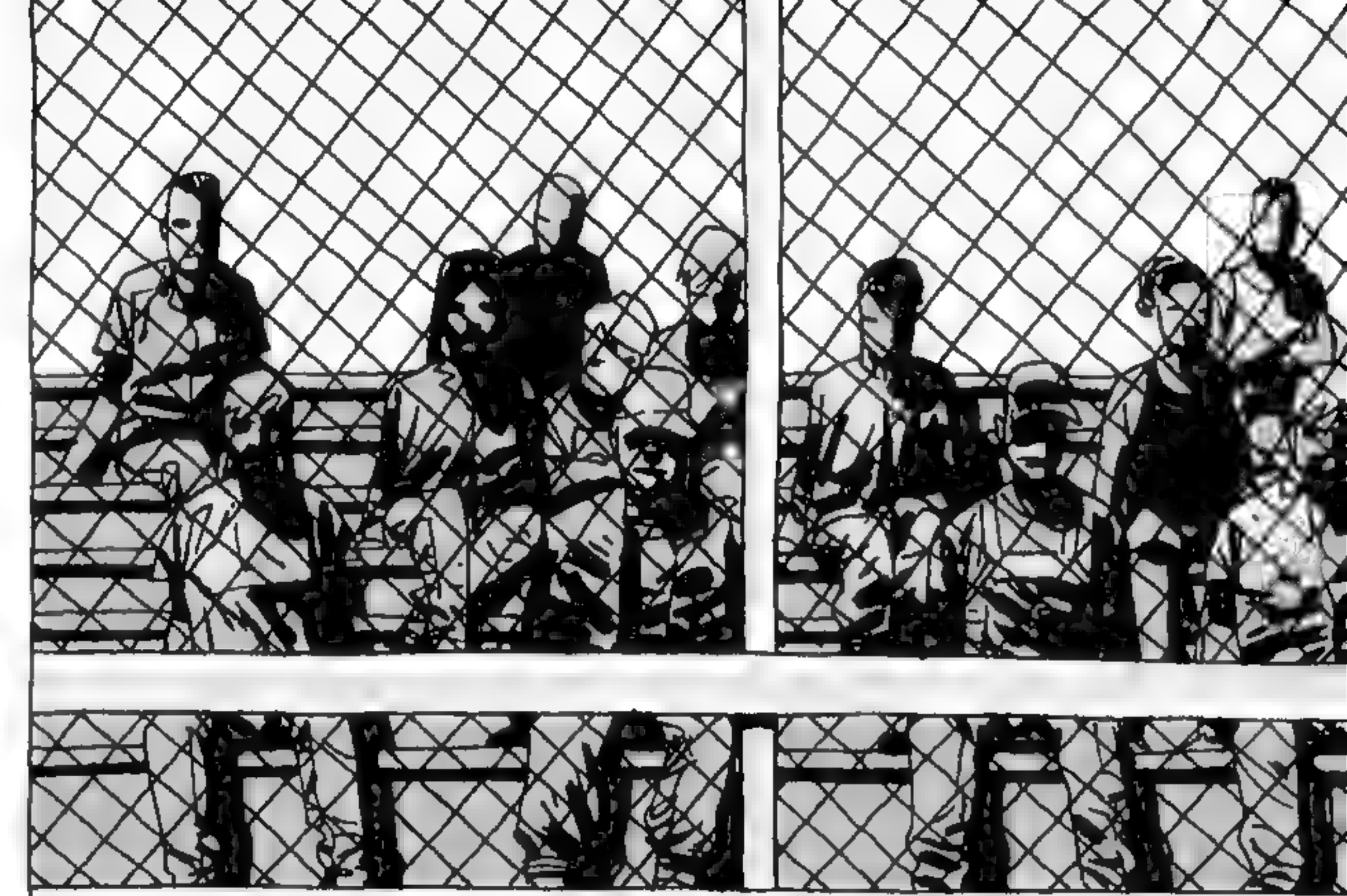
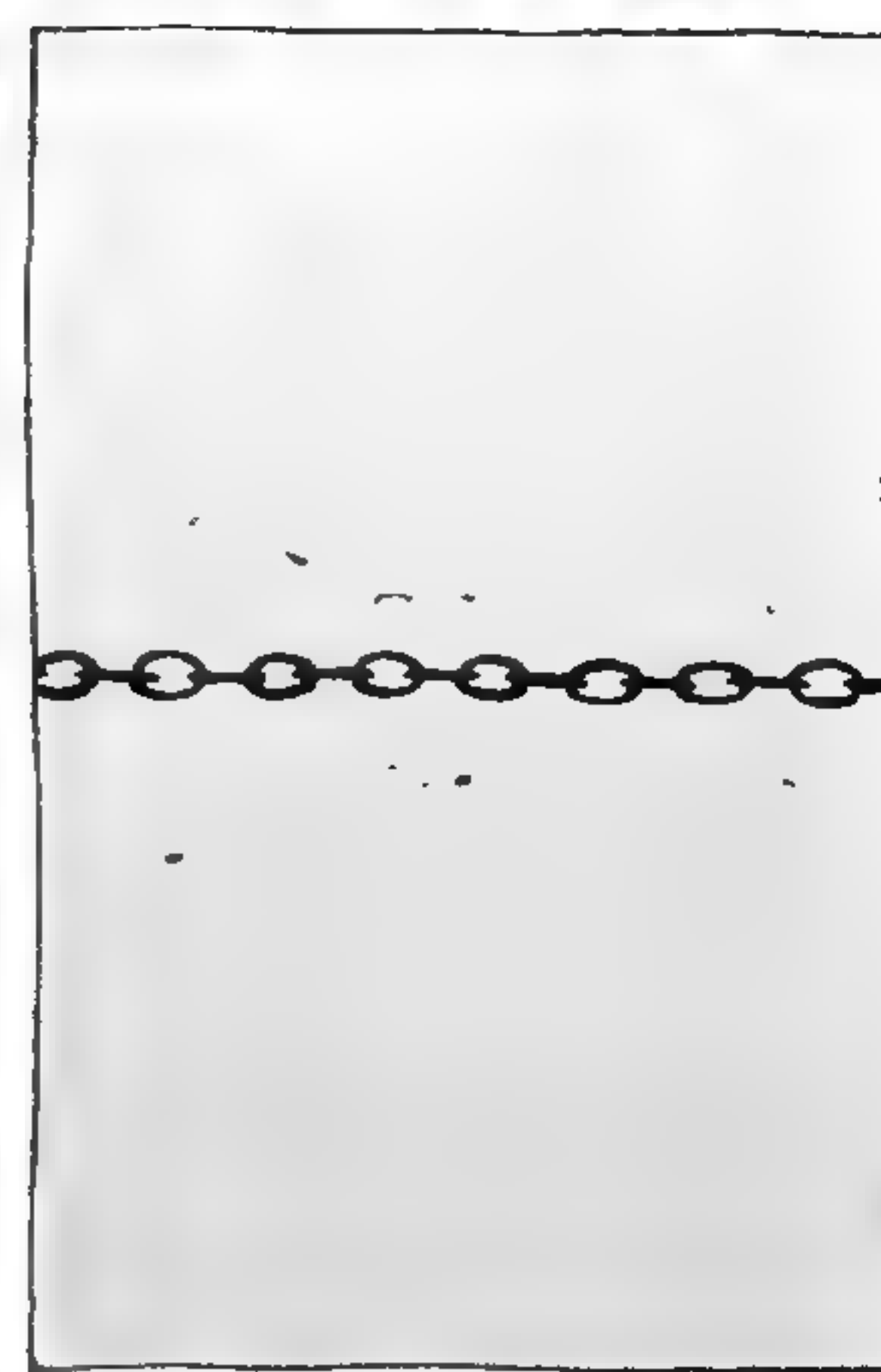
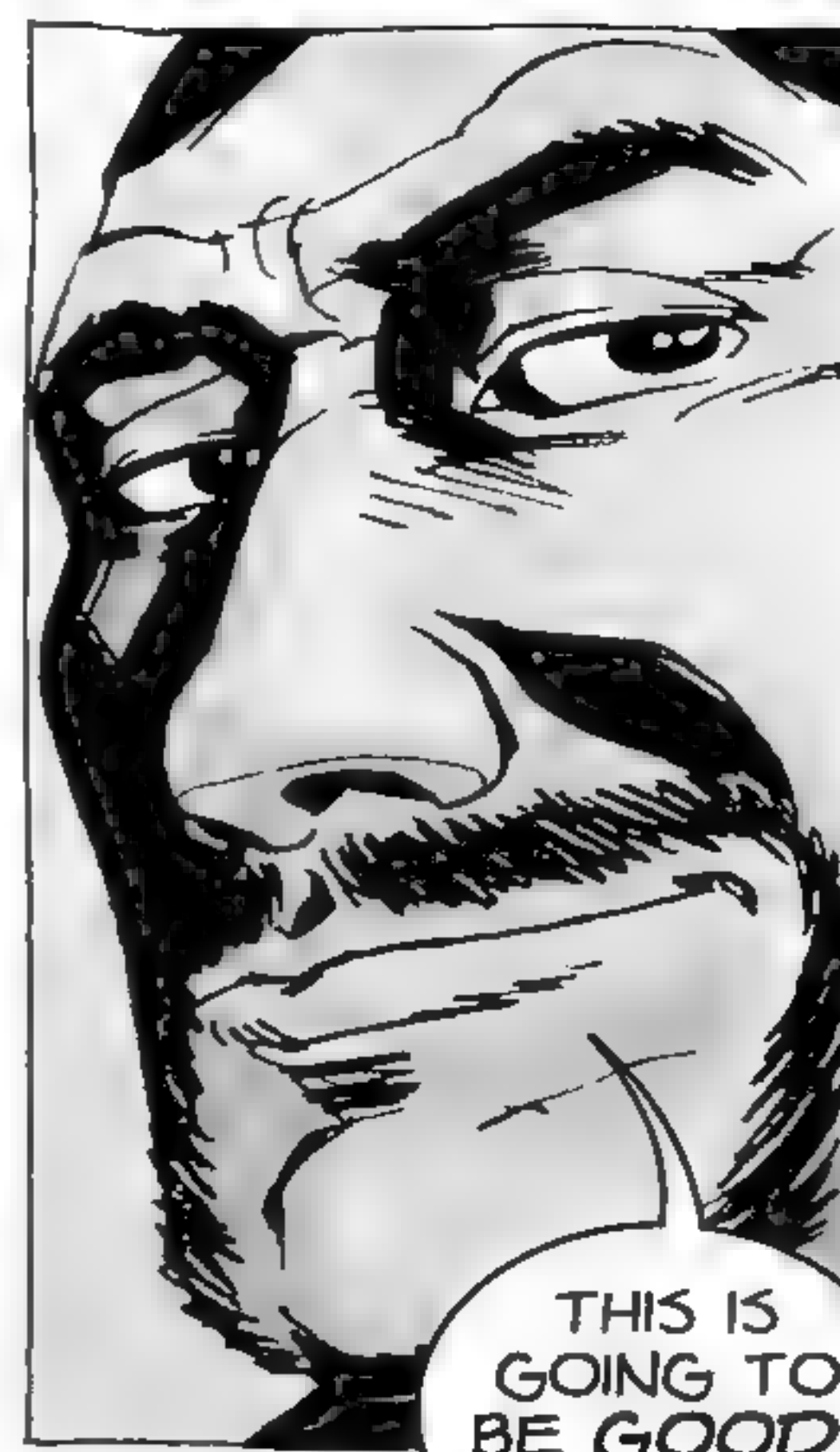
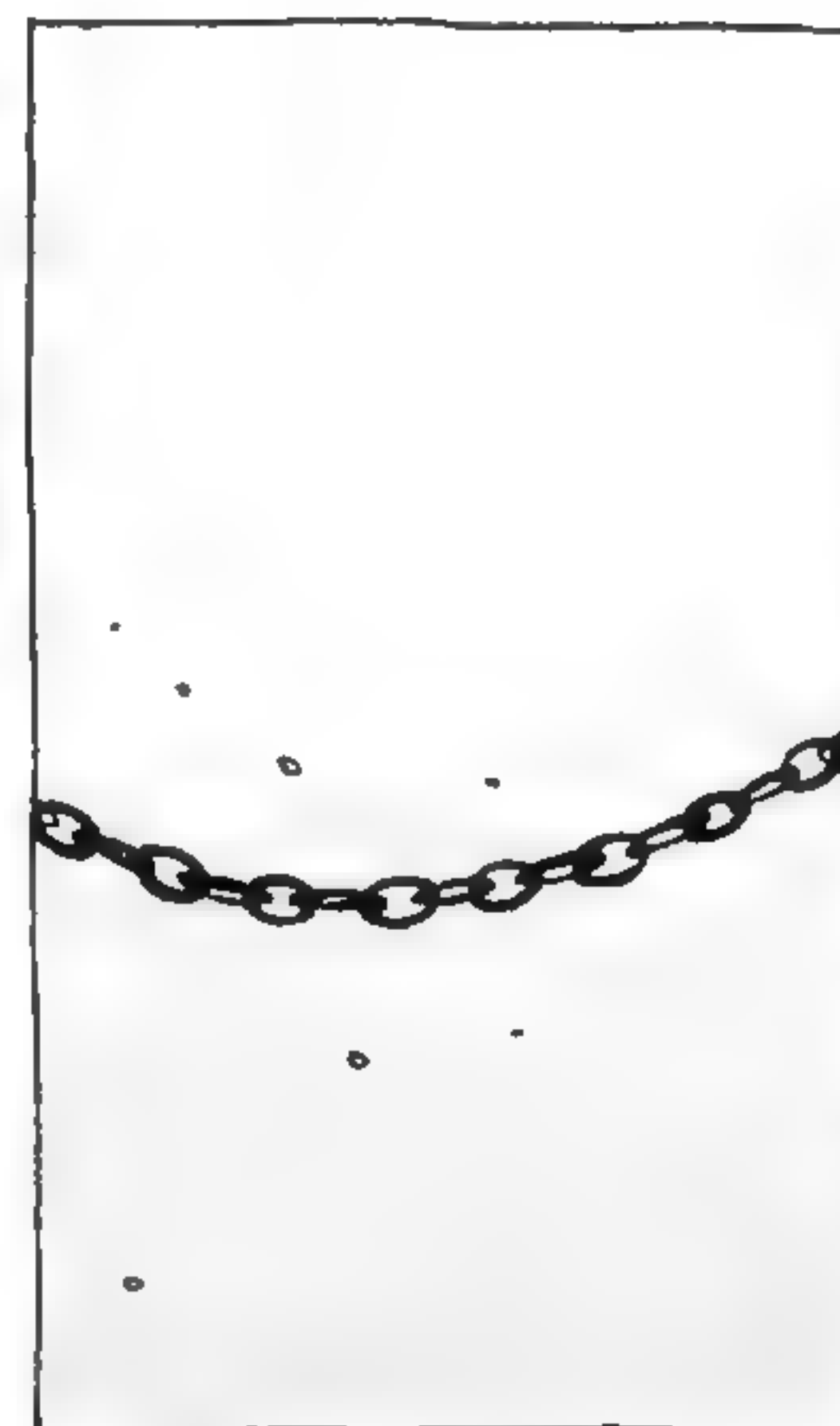
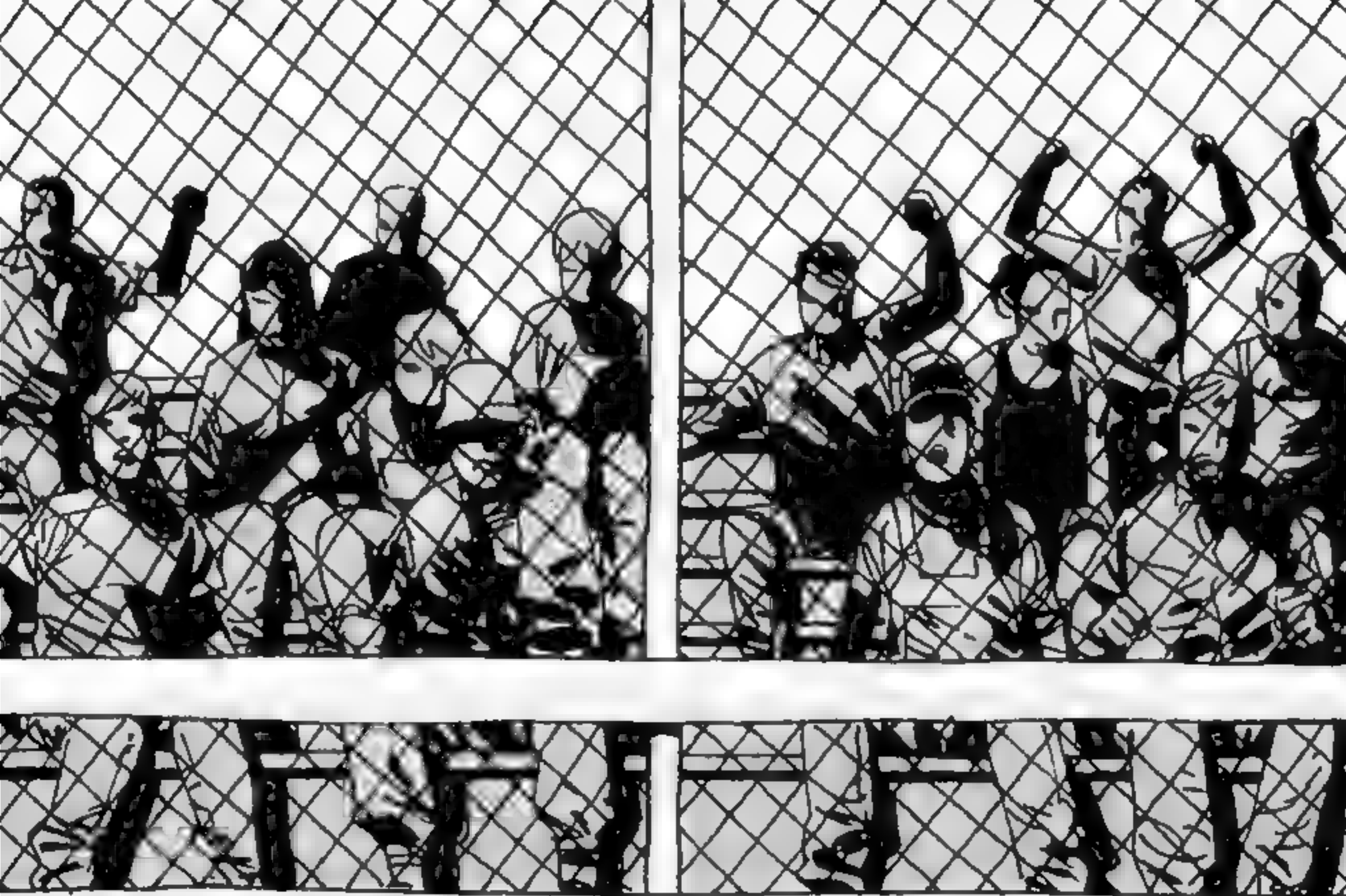


WHAT'S
WITH THAT
GUY? IS
HE OKAY?

DOES
HE NOW?

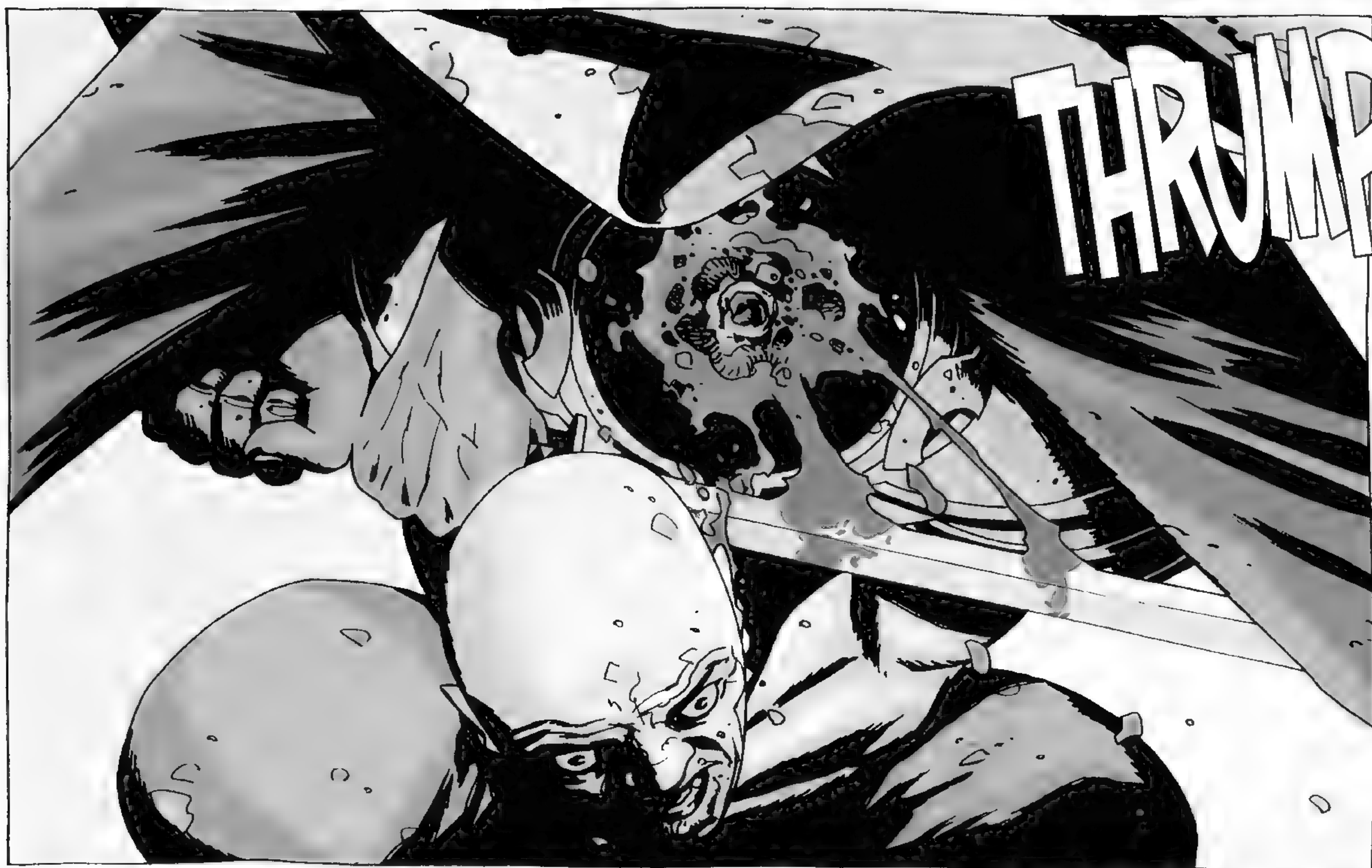








FWOP!



THRUMP!



WHAT.

THE.

FUCK?



GET DOWN THERE
AND REIN THOSE
BITERS IN AND GET
HER THE FUCK
OUT MY SIGHT.

I SWEAR
I'M GOING TO
KILL THAT
BITCH.









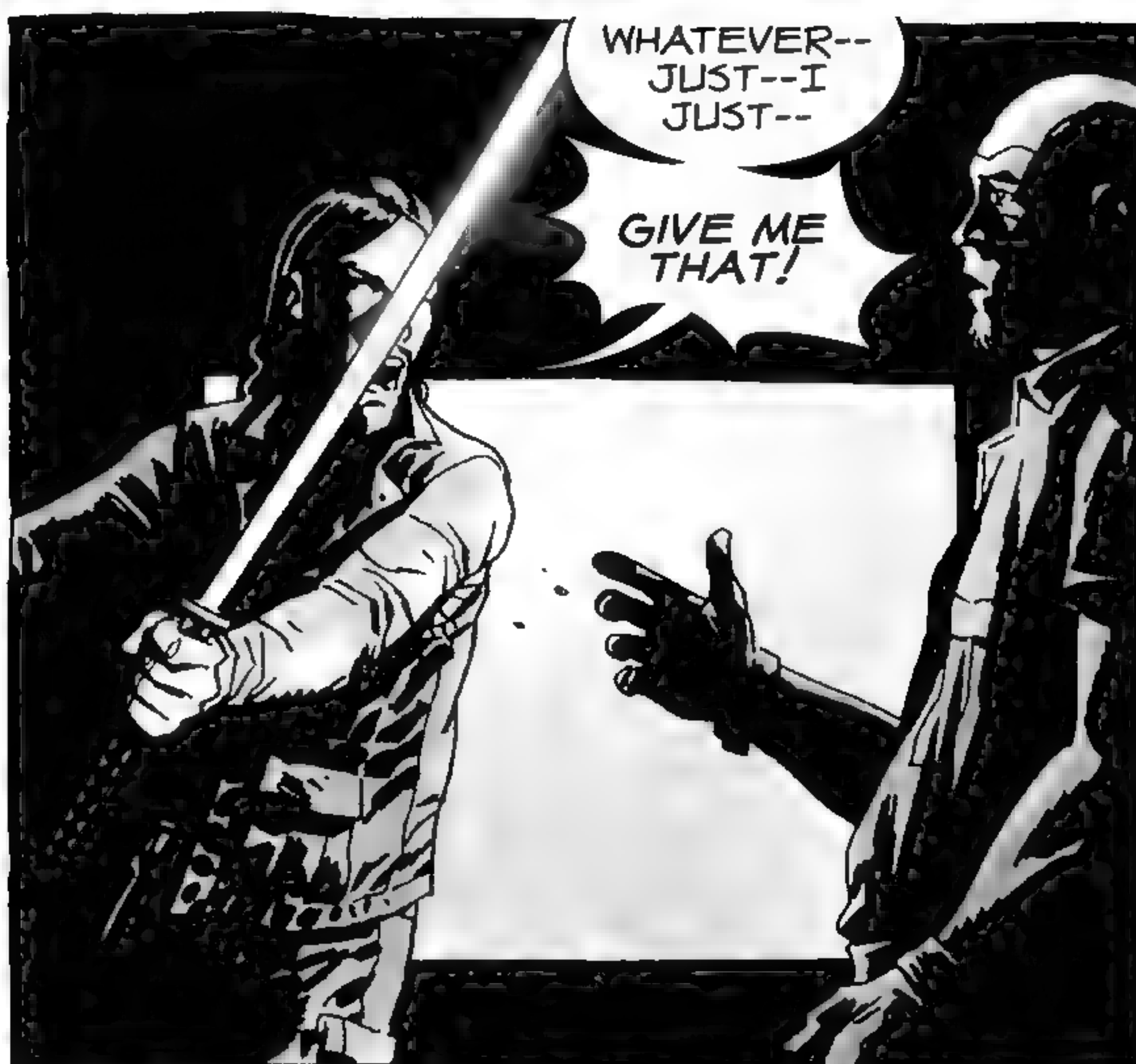
WELL?! SHE IN THERE? DID YOU GET HER BACK IN THERE?!

IS SHE TIED UP?!

WELL?!



WE GOT HER IN THERE, MAN-- BUT IT WASN'T EASY.



WHATEVER-- JUST--I JUST--

GIVE ME THAT!



SIR?



WHERE DOES THAT BITCH GET OFF?! I TOLD HER I'D GO EASY ON HER--I JUST NEEDED HER TO DO THIS ONE FAVOR FOR ME!

ONE FAVOR! SHE AGREED TO HELP ME--SHE AGREED!!

FUCK!

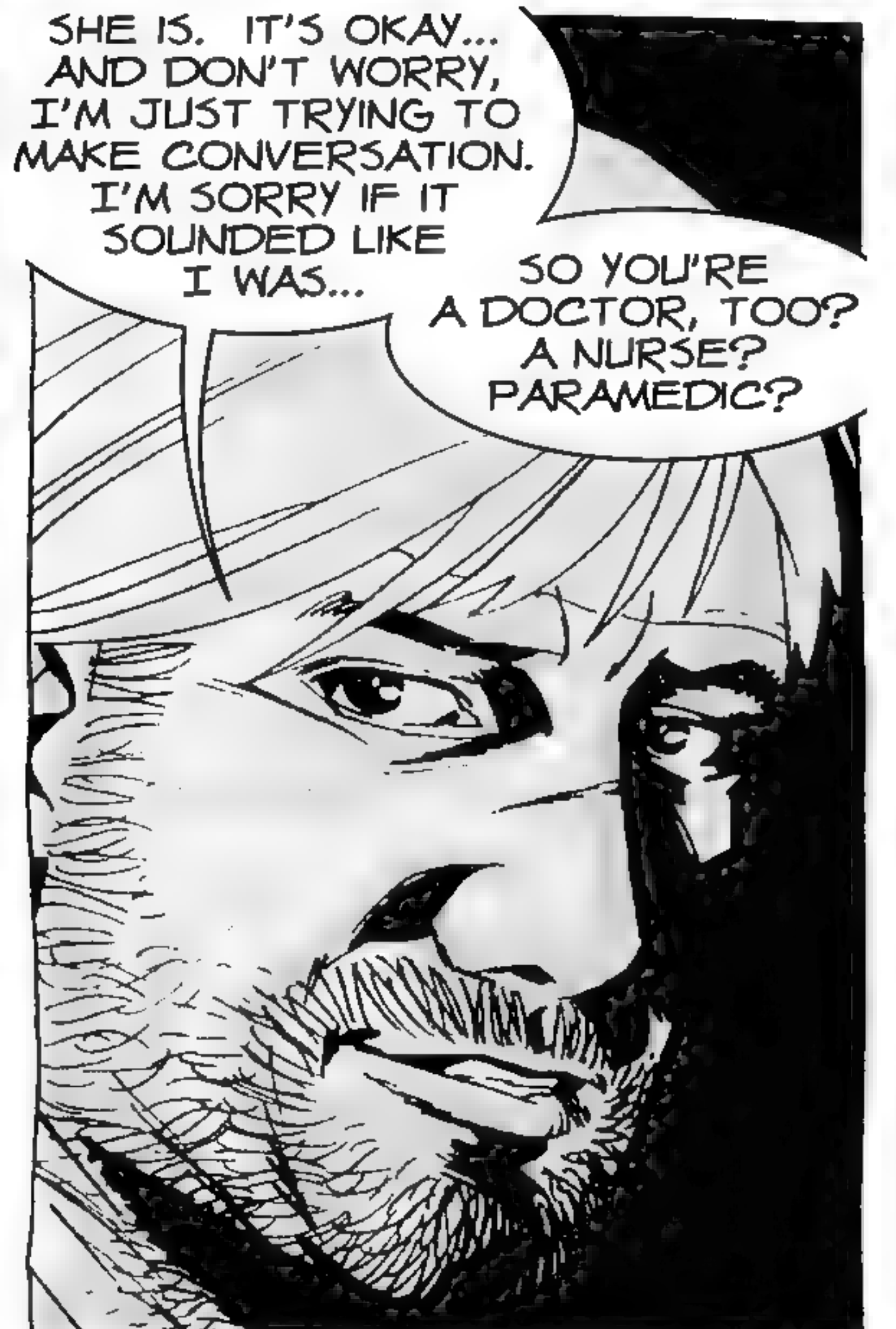
FUCK!

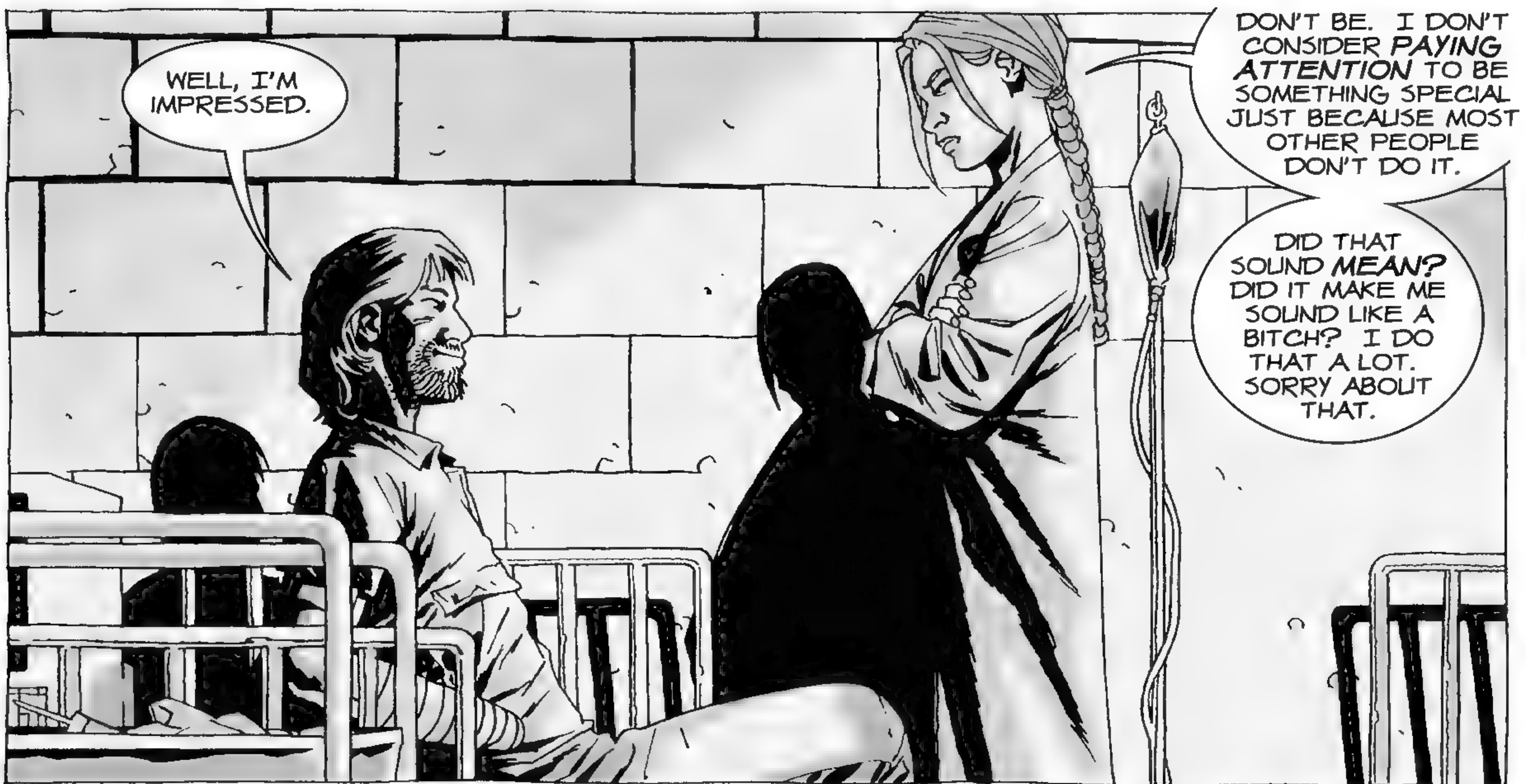
FUCK!

WE HAD AN AGREEMENT!!



TALK ME OUT OF WALKING IN THERE RIGHT NOW AND KILLING THAT WOMAN.







I MISS MY WIFE.

I JUST...
I CAN'T STOP
THINKING
ABOUT
HER.

SHE'S
PREGNANT.



REALLY?



YEAH. IT'S DUE IN
A COUPLE MONTHS.
LAST TIME I SAW
HER, SHE WAS
DOING FINE.

THING
ABOUT THE
BABY, THOUGH...
I DON'T
KNOW IF--



RICK--GET
UP!

NOW!

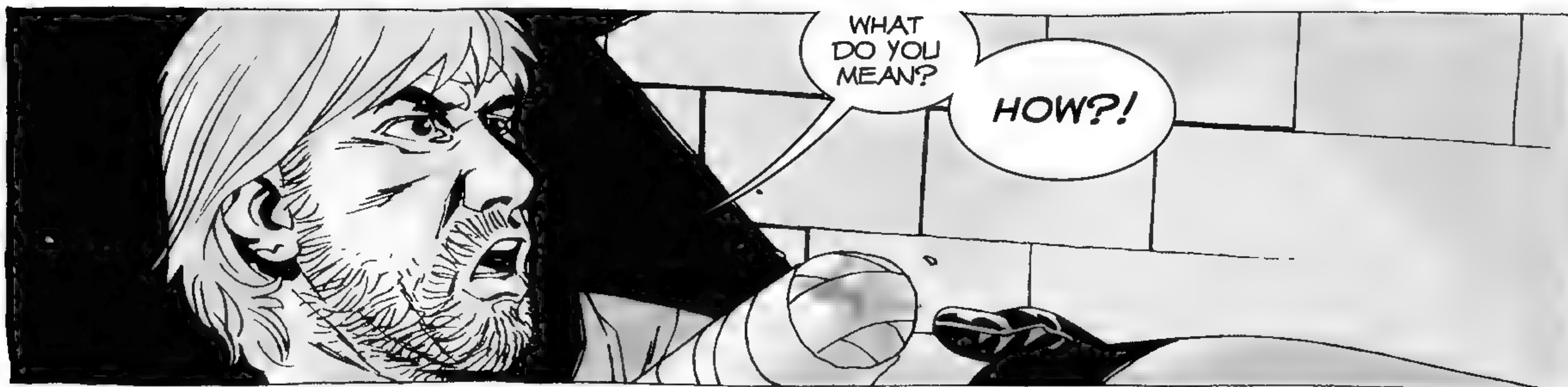


COME ON--
WE'VE GOT
TO GO!

WHA--?!



WHAT
ARE YOU
DOING?!



LETTER HACKS

WRITE TO US AT:

THE WALKING DEAD
C/O FUNK-O-TRON
P.O. BOX 54386
LEXINGTON, KY 40555-4386

OR

WALKINGDEAD@FUNKOTRON.COM

Hey look! Issue 31.

Uh... not a lot of free time these days... just got back from San Diego (it was great meeting you). So... let's answer some MAIL!

Woo hoo!

I received the first collection of comics as a gift last december, and read them a month ago out of boredom, I was very taken with your view of a giant zombie apocolypse, the comic is very fast and very witty, but my favorite part would be the very human characters.

Amazingly, I even tracked down a comic book shop so I could find out what happens, it wasn't quite how I pictured a comic book shop would be like, for one, it was very well lit and the staff was nothing if not helpful, but the rest was exactly how I pictured it, in that a large fraction of the patrons were overweight and kept staring at my chest and mumbling.

In all fairness--you should admit that probably happens in other places as well, right?

I realize you must get a lot of mail, so I doubt this will be read, and I very much doubt I'll ever get a reply, but I thought I would take the time to tell you that you are doing a great job with your comic book and it is very enjoyable.

Also, I realize the mail account name "burnumall" sounds a bit weird, it's a friend's email account, I'm curious as to exactly what it means but I'm too embarrassed to ask.

-Girl who didn't sign her email

Well, you'll be happy to know I emailed your friend and she told me it has something to do with ancient burial rites and funerary incantations. It all sounded a little fruity to me.

Dear Roberto Kirkenhiem IV,

You're gunna off Glenn aren't ya? It ain't gunna

be rick or Mich, 'cause they're fighters who don't go down like punks. (unless mich sacrifices herself for the good of the others... which I doubt she would do seeing as she's still a relatively new character)

Though if they end up having to fight each other in the arena, I think you need to include with each copy a burnt CD with the Star Trek fight music.

Anyway, on to more pressing matters.

1) I dunno how Rick and the gang are gunna get out of THIS sticky situation (in reference to issue 27 since I know these don't get printed for like 3 issues)

This isn't a question! Grrr.

2) What was the first thing you ever got published, and how did you feel? Your work is so good that it's inspired me to write my own comic books. So far i've got my own zombie series planned, along with a superhero trade and what i'm told is a semi cheesy drama about a guy who has a type writer that can write dreams. Oh, and I almost forgot, but I've got a batman story arch that i'd love to do sometime, but i'd imagine i'd have to be a total success or DC would have to be completely desperate before they let me come within 10 feet of a batman script.

My first published work was the self-published Battle Pope (being reprinted in color by Image right now). It was a great feeling to get that printed comic and hold it in my hands... and I still feel the same way whenever I get a new issue of anything I work on. I truly love this job.

The type writer one is the shortest of the three so i'm going to try and get that published first.

Good luck.

anyway keep up the good work, lovin' it all, Invincible, marvel zombies, Battle Pope especially.

-Phil

Oh, see--you already knew about Battle Pope.

Dear Mr. Kirkman,
I am writing this letter to fulfill your female quotient...that's right... I'm a girl. A girl who reads comics...and drools over zombies. But I digress...I read this article in the NY Times a while back, in the fashion section, no less, about the globalization of zombies...I just want to make sure that WD, via the transitive properties, doesn't become lame. Anyway, I really have been enjoying the female characters...Michonne seems interesting...let's see what happens there...Carol seems like she's suffering from PTSD but I hope it's something more devastatingly interesting like bipolar or schizophrenia. I feel like everyone in WD could carry the story on their own...could have their own spin-off...except maybe Dale..... and, I mean, I love what's his face... but Lori is hardcore. She's going to give birth au natural! Boy or Girl? Any names? How about Viscera?

Love,
Leslie

PS. (my gentleman friend will die if you print this)

Consider your gentleman friend DEAD! You don't like Dale? What's wrong with him? Carol probably does have something wrong with her--but y'know... who's there who could diagnose something like that? Thanks for reading.

Just wanted to thank you guys for the awesome story that The Walking Dead is.
Your story is the reason I am awake at one in the morning reading with a flashlight and keeping a fire axe at close reach :)

That and the fact that you didn't pay the electric bill, right?

I've not felt this kind of chills since I first read Stephen Kings' The Shining.

Thanks again and keep up the excellent work. I am hungry for more.

Best regards from Iceland
Siggi Ben :)

Thanks, and keep it real! Have fun in Iceland.

Dear Mr. Kirkman,

Let me start by saying I really love The Walking

Dead comics. We used to be on Ebay comic boards and now are on a forum called The Comics Corral and someone pointed out this comic to my husband, who in turn, bought them for me. The series was at issue 19 when he bought the first trade paperback. I fell in love with it. I now not only own all the trade paper backs, but I am getting the ongoing issues, too.

I have no complaints about the story and think it is great. The only suggestion that I have is to make it a TV Show (HBO/Showtime) I don't think they could do justice in a 2-3 hour movie, but an on going series would be great.

TV show, huh? That's a good suggestion. I'll get right on that.

I also am really hoping we can make it to the Comic Con in San Diego so I can meet you. By the way my hubby loves The Walking Dead, too. He mainly collects Superhero Comics. We have thought about checking out Invincible, but we haven't had the chance yet. He does get Ultimate X-Men and Marvel Team-Up. The ONLY complaint is we did order The Walking Dead Hard Cover 1-24 and all we got was the shaft as is sold out. LOL.

Thank you so much for this comic(series).

Thanks,
Kelly Garcia

Wow... is that three out of the first five emails that are girls? Weird. Lotsa ladies in this issue's letters column. Right on.

DUDE!

I hadn't been to my LCS for a while so when I went I had issues 25, 26 & 27 waiting for me so I thought this would be a good opportunity to reread them all from # 1, so I did, and I found some things hopefully you can help me with....

1. In #1 I noticed the escaped jailbird shooting at Rick and Shane looks a lot like a skinny Axel, who just happens to be in jail for armed robbery. Is this a coincidence, or have I ruined where you are going with the Axel plot? Sorry if I have.

Nope, that's just a coincidence... because I'm a hack. He doesn't look THAT much like Axel though.

2. In #15 Thomas says to Patricia he saw her with Otis and asks if it's her boyfriend. A few pages later when Rick leaves to shoot zombie Shane, Lori wonders if he is going to check on Otis at the farm since they haven't seen him since they left the farm, and he doesn't show up at the jail until Michonne does in #19. So my question is, how did Thomas see Otis? Is this an oversight on your part, 'cause it doesn't add up?

These aren't the droids you're looking for. I think Otis was at the prison briefly dropping

off supplies and Lori hadn't seen him. Or something. I'd have to check out the issues... I'm not convinced there is a discrepancy.

3. With all these couples hooking up and having sex, how come no one else is getting pregnant? There's been no talk about birth control or anything, and I thought Hershel would of had a talk to Maggie about it.

I'm sure there's a condom or two lying around the prison somewhere. Little things like this, I feel, are better left assumed and not really dealt with. I mean... where are they getting toothpaste? Is that just in the prison? Did it run out? What about... candles? Or lightbulbs? Did Glenn really steal enough batteries for the flashlights to still be working? It'd be boring if I took the time to explain all that stuff.

4. I know Axel and Tyreese didn't see the helicopter, but how did they not hear it? You can usually hear them way before you can actually see them.

Maybe they we're singing really loud to each other--or were inside the prison, playing basketball--or were yelling at someone. There's any number of excuses... some of them aren't even silly.

5. Since people can turn into a zombie even from deaths non zombie bite related, does that mean the zombie plague/incident started with some kind of chemical warfare or something? Obviously the air/oxygen on earth has been altered. Is this correct? How did you come up with this idea? I've never seen this kind of thing in the Zombie genre where they turn without being bitten.

The origins of the zombie plague are unknown and will probably remain that way... but yeah--it's something even the living are infected with.

I had a few more queries the other day but I can't think of them now....

Sorry about that.

Anyway, keep up the great work. I am loving The Walking Dead. How much you ask? Well, I've been buying every Batman comic for 19 years and they've never taken second place on my pile to be read before, so CONGRATS!!!

Deakin Gilford
Australia

Awesome--thanks for writing.

Letter Hacks,

The reason I am writing is that your fans have written in about some really good zombie stories/movies that I normally wouldn't have known about. Undead, The Zombie Survival Guide, Reign of the Dead, and The Rising/City of the Dead all

come to mind. I have no plans to stop buying this comic until the aliens are introduced, but I still seek zombie entertainment between your books. Please encourage your readers to write in about other stories in the genre.

The Walking Dead story is still going strong. I Think you will be able to do a lot with the 2nd group of survivors introduced in 27. Keep up the great work.

Mike Gineman

Thanks!

Dear Mr. Kirkman,

You are the man! This is the best Zombie comic ever made! I can't get enough of the great story telling and the art is the best B/W I have seen. I hope this title is leading its way to at least a trilogy of The Walking Dead movies. I have to say that from watching NOLD when I was a kid I grew up with an irrational fear of dead people climbing out of graves and attacking me. Now I am thrilled about all things zombie related and it seems the world is seeing a new age of Zombie interest. Here's to another generation of kids growing up with the fear of the dead. Lastly, is it possible to have readers submit a list of their favorite zombie movies and you could use this info to make a: The Walking Dead Fans Top 25 Zombie Movies Ever list in a future issue? Thanks!

-Some guy who didn't sign his email

That's not a bad idea. Why don't you letter writers start sending in obscure recommendations? I mean... we all know the top TEN zombie movies... or the top ten well known zombie movies... but what about the obscure ones. Snap to it!

Dear Kirkman,

Just thought I would write to give you my props, to ask some questions and voice a complaint.

1. I was getting pretty restless while all of the women in the comic were being pansies, I mean sure, they helped out when they needed to but most of the time they just sat back, worried, complained and had sex with there male counterparts. I was very excited when you brought in Michonne a strong female character. I'm interested in seeing if or how the other female characters react to someone with such a different outlook. Are they going to get up and stop being pansies, or just whine and complain about how much Michonne is not a pansy?

They're probably going to wash clothes and do dishes... and behave. Seriously though (I'm not sexist) the point of the book (or one of them at least) is that the characters grow and change as time goes on. You've got to start somewhere and as time goes on I think you'll see all the characters, female and male, evolve to survive in this zombie-filled

world. They won't be frail and helpless much longer (not that they totally were before). Sigh... I should have never killed Donna.

2. In issues 26 and 27 the prospect of feeding the dead to the zombies is brought into the story line... This just doesn't make sense to me. If soon after you die you become a zombie, and zombies don't eat other zombies then could you really shoot someone, chop them up, put them into a sack then feed them to a zombie? I don't think so... Zombies wouldn't be interested in a cold severed arm, it takes the primal hunting instinct out of the picture! I guess it's pointless for me to bring this up now, but eh...

There is a period of time, after a person dies, before the body starts to decompose. As shown in issue 29 with The Governor's daughter, after a while... the meat gets old and isn't good... but before then, it's almost as good as eating live meat.

3. Please don't have a zombie baby... maybe a zombie toddler kind of like in Pet Semetary, but no zombie baby.

No zombie baby? We'll see... if Lori EVER has that kid that is...

Thanks for reading my ranting...

Much love,
Lauren Caitlin Ayrey
Olympia, Wa

Man... a whole lot of ladies wrote in this month. That's totally cool.

Starting on the next page--ROCK BOTTOM PREVIEW!

Okay--now for something else--another preview!

Coming in September from AiT/PlanetLar is ROCK BOTTOM a story written by JOE CASEY and drawn by none other than... CHARLIE ADLARD!! That's right kids--our boy has been moonlighting. There's plenty of info on the next page before the preview so I won't bore you with details--GO CHECK IT OUT! And make sure you tell your retailer you want this book.

Now I think it's time for me to do a little shilling. I mean... we've got to do something to keep the lights on right?

ITEM! INVINCIBLE is still kicking ass and taking names. Issue 35 should be in stores a week after this issue. Lot's of cool stuff going on. Ryan Ottley and Bill Crabtree are doing fantastic work. Give it a look. Also in stores around this time, The hardcover containing issues 14-24 and the TPB containing 25-30. So if you get "INVINCIBLE: The Ultimate Collection" volumes 1 and 2 and the volume 5 TPB you'll just need to get

issues 31-35 in back issues and you'll have it all! Hooray!!

ITEM! BATTLE POPE is continuing with its monthly reprints. Issue 9, out now, even includes a new 10-page section that's never been published. So if you're looking for NEW Battle Pope action, this is the only place to get it... at least until next year or so... hint, hint. Issue 10 is also in stores now... ask for it by name.

ITEM! MARVEL TEAM-UP is kicking into high gear leading up to the super-cool issue 25! The current arc, Freedom Ring is in the middle of it's run, with issue 22 out soon where we introduce the world to IRON MANIAC. It's a hoot! Also in stores soon, Marvel Team-Up Vol. 3: League of Losers, featuring issue 14, the Spider-Man/Invincible team-up! Don't miss it a second time! Eat your vegetables!

ITEM! MARVEL ZOMBIES is getting collected in AUGUST in an oversized hardcover the likes of which the world has never seen. It features a brand-spanking-new cover by Arthur Suydam and will even feature EVERY COVER DONE for the series. It also includes the actual comic, written by yours truly with art by Sean Philips. I'm told it's quite good... but who believes my mom anyway? Seeing is believing!

ITEM! My run on ULTIMATE X-MEN continues! What does the future hold for Magician? What does Jean Gray do now that she knows what she knows about The Phoenix? All these answers and more questions asked in MAGICAL running through issues 72-74 featuring art by Tom Raney. Fight the power! Hot new artist Ben Oliver returns for issue 75--which features the introduction of ULTIMATE CABLE! LOOK OUT!

ITEM! It was just announced that I'm doing yet another series for Marvel. This time it's THE IRREDEEMABLE ANT-MAN! For those of you thinking Ant-Man isn't the coolest character in the world, don't worry, this series is going to be so off the wall you won't even notice. It's going to be a blast. And for those of you who love Ant-Man more than life itself. This is the book for you, we're going to be showing this guy the respect and care he deserves. Also, the art team is Phil Hester, Ande Parks and Bill Crabtree on pencils, inks and colors. So you know it's going to be a SOLID book. Don't count your chickens until they're hatched!

That's it for this issue. See you next month!

-Robert Kirkman

THIS EXCLUSIVE PREVIEW OF
GØDLAND WRITER JOE CASEY AND WALKING DEAD ARTIST CHARLIE ADLARD'S
UPCOMING ORIGINAL GRAPHIC NOVEL IS BROUGHT TO YOU BY
ROBERT KIRKMAN AND IMAGE COMICS

rock bottom

What would you do if you discovered you were *turning to stone*?

What would that extraordinary circumstance do to your life?

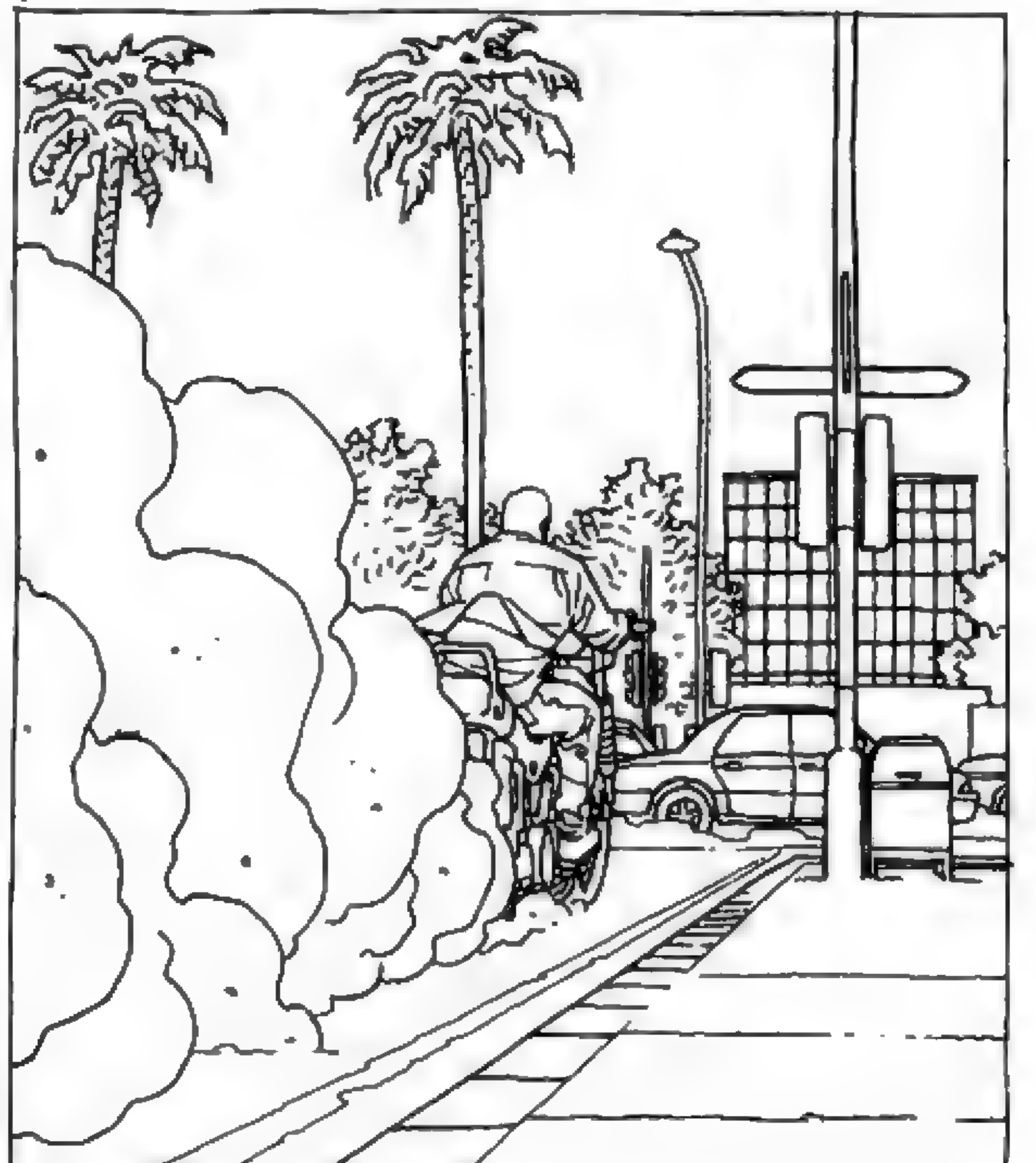
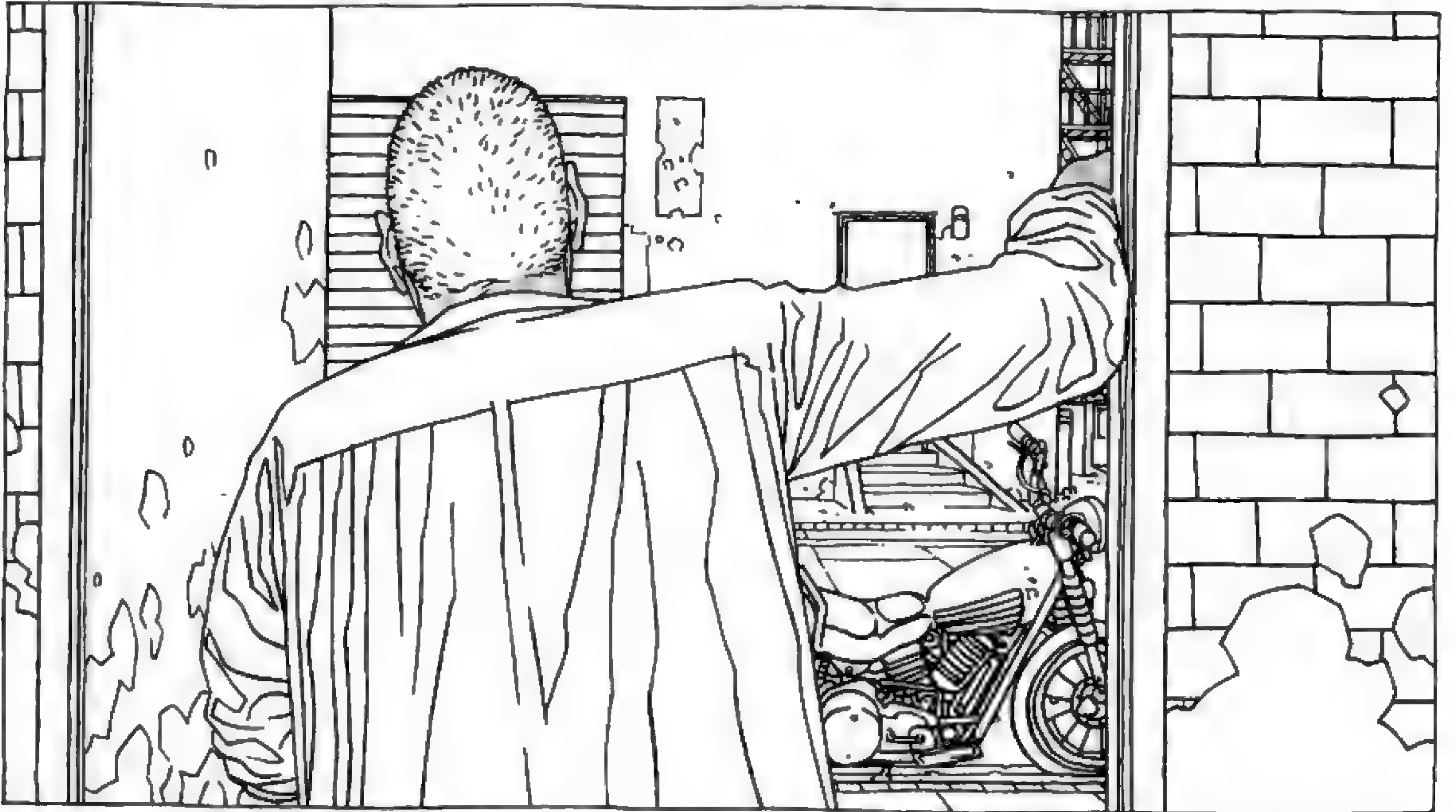
Writer Joe Casey and Eisner Award-nominated artist Charlie Adlard answer these questions and more in this long-awaited, gut-wrenching original graphic novel drama.

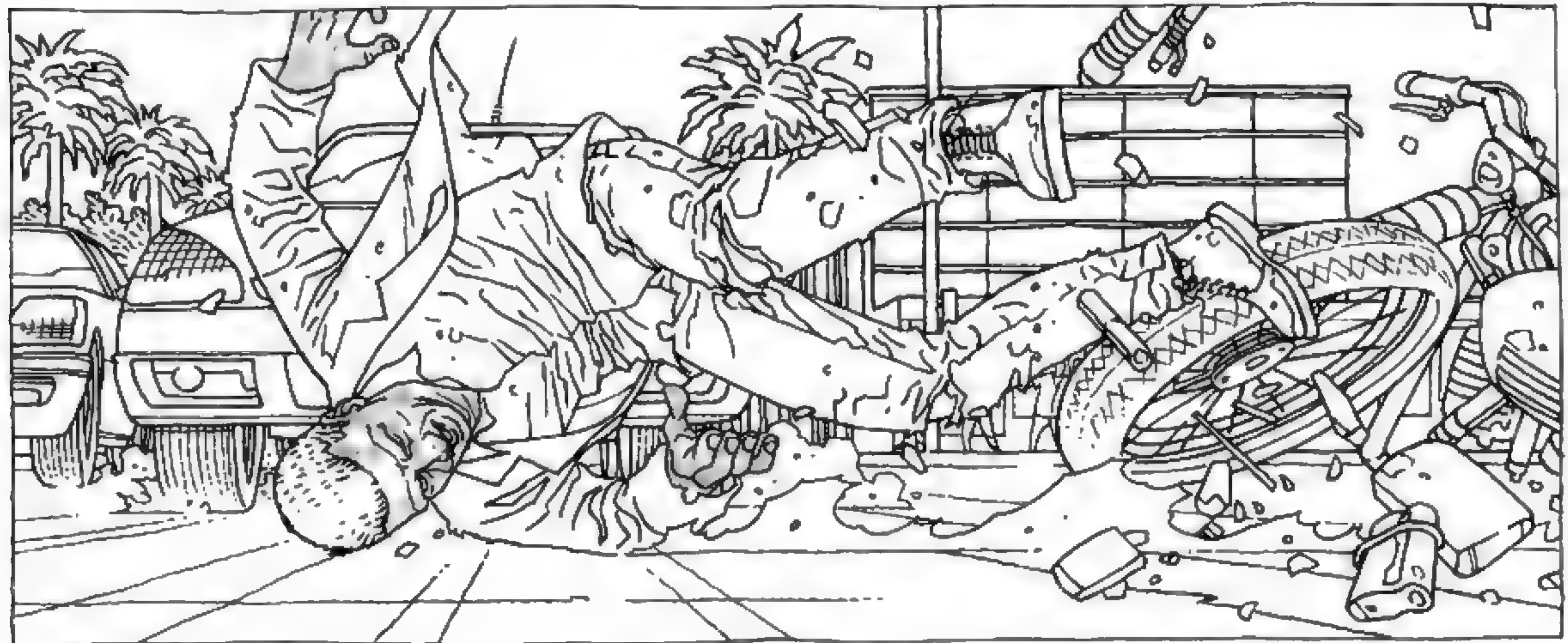
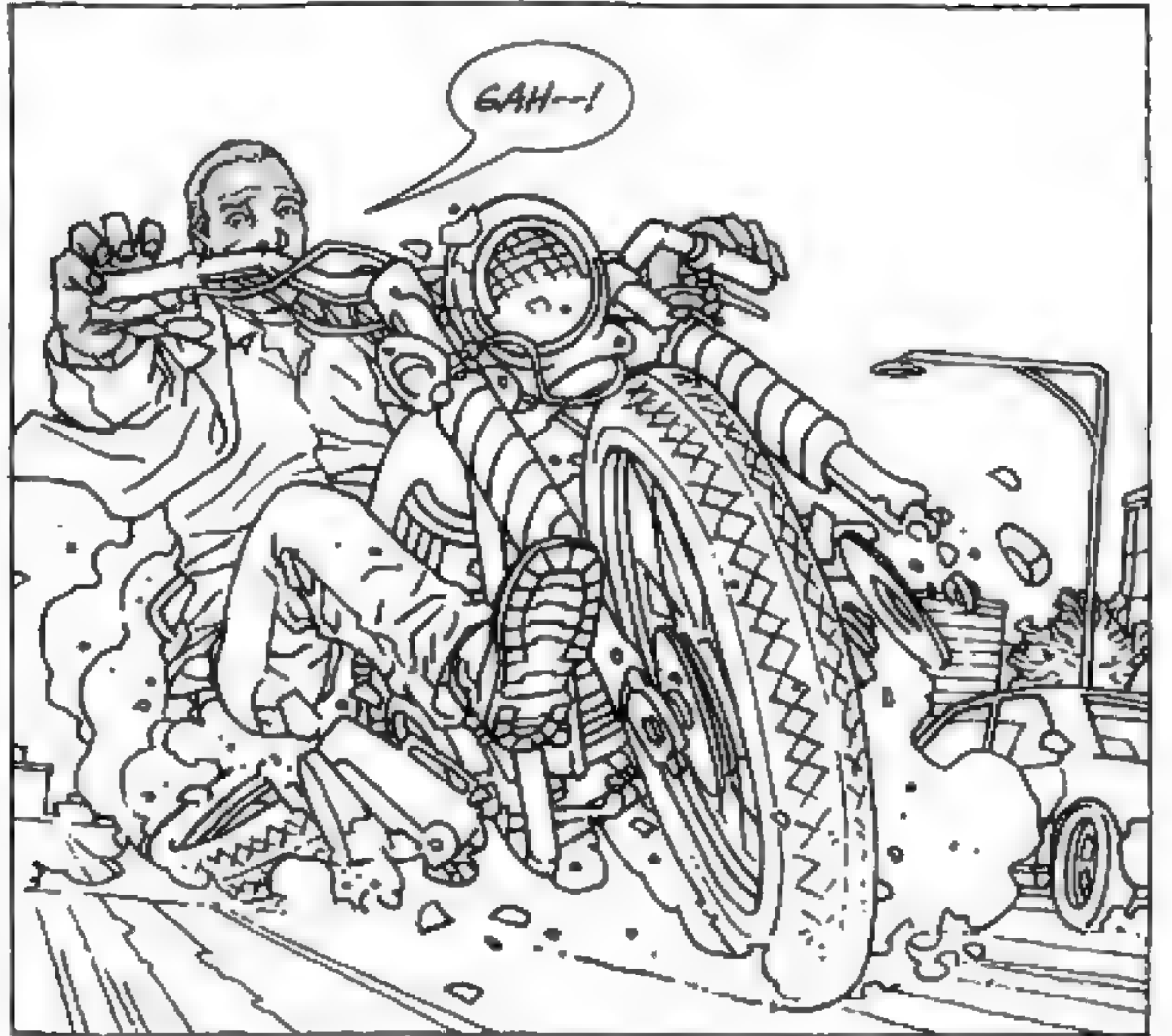
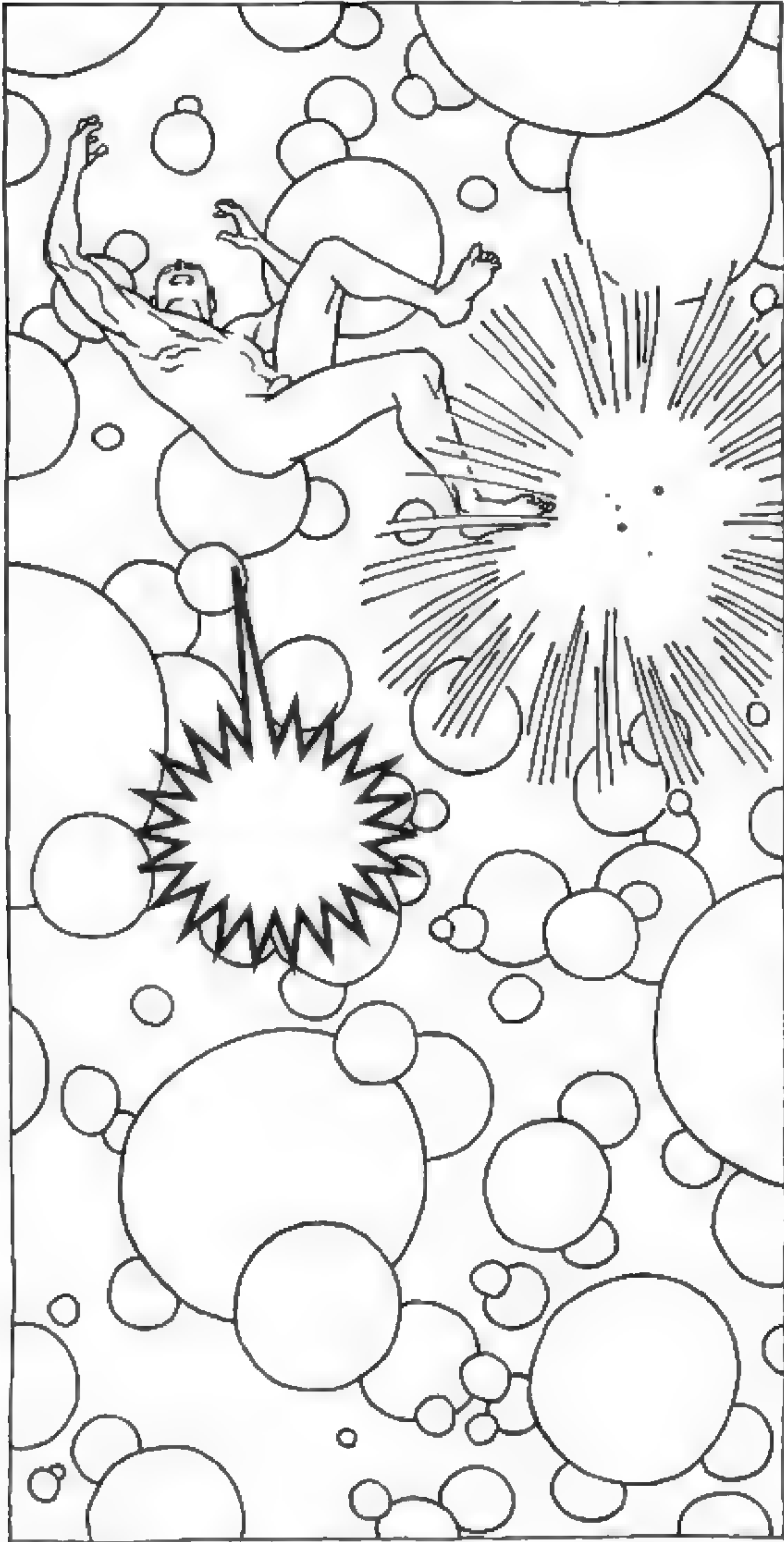
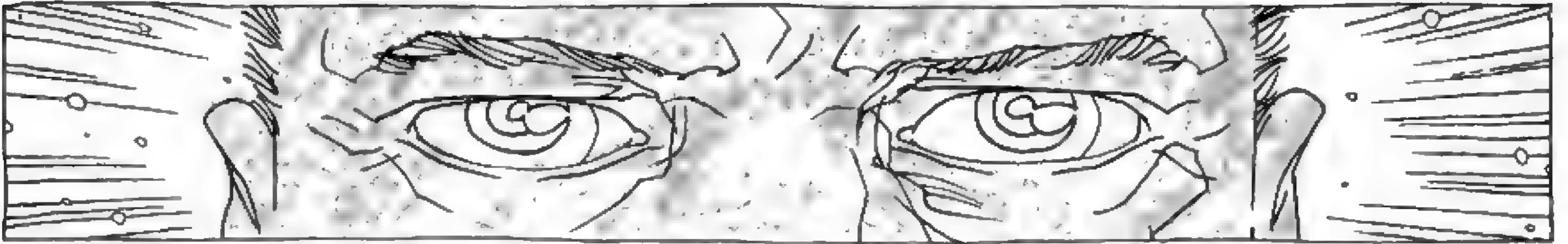
Thomas Dare was an ordinary man with ordinary problems, until fate stepped in to turn his life upside-down. Make no mistake, this is no superhero origin story...

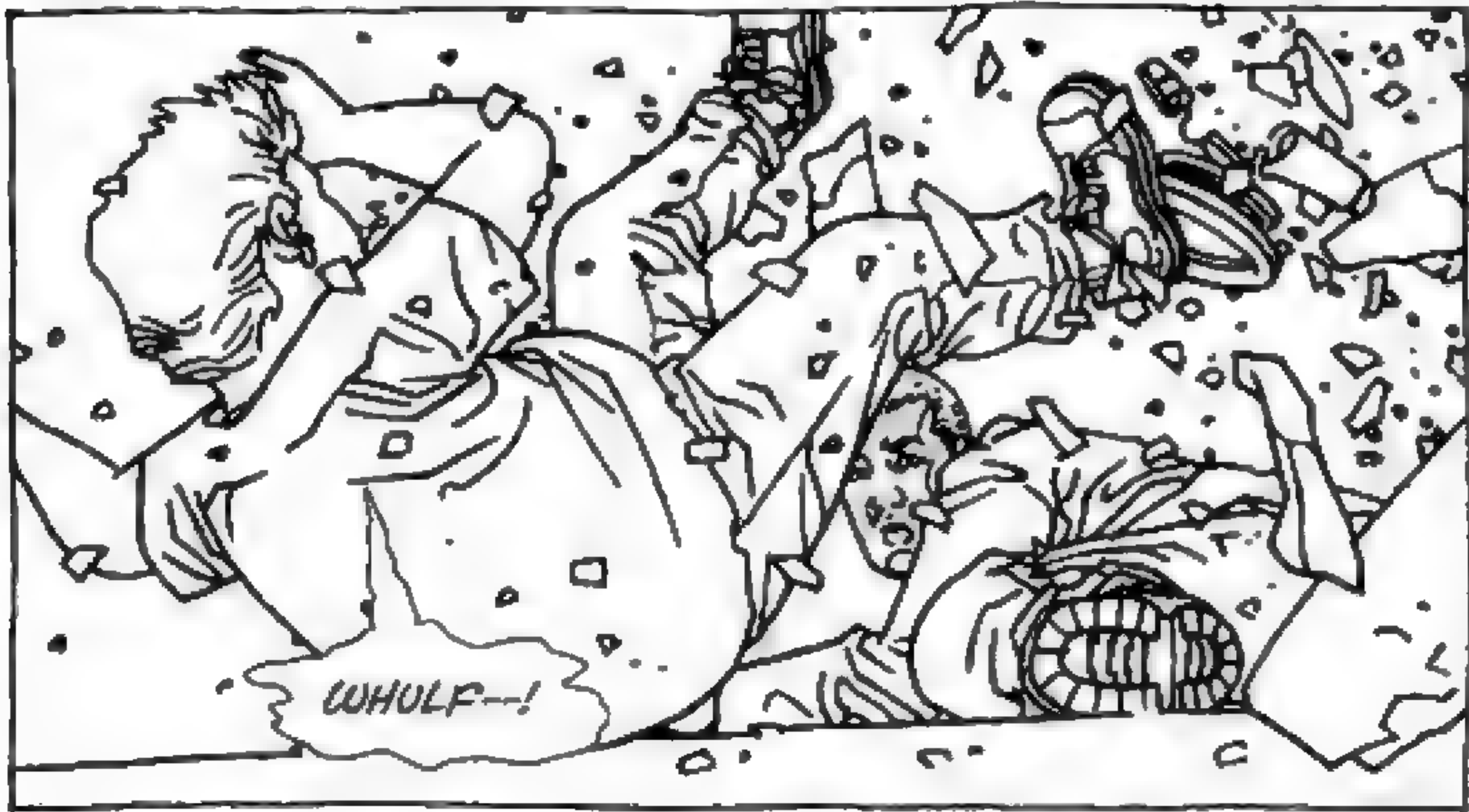
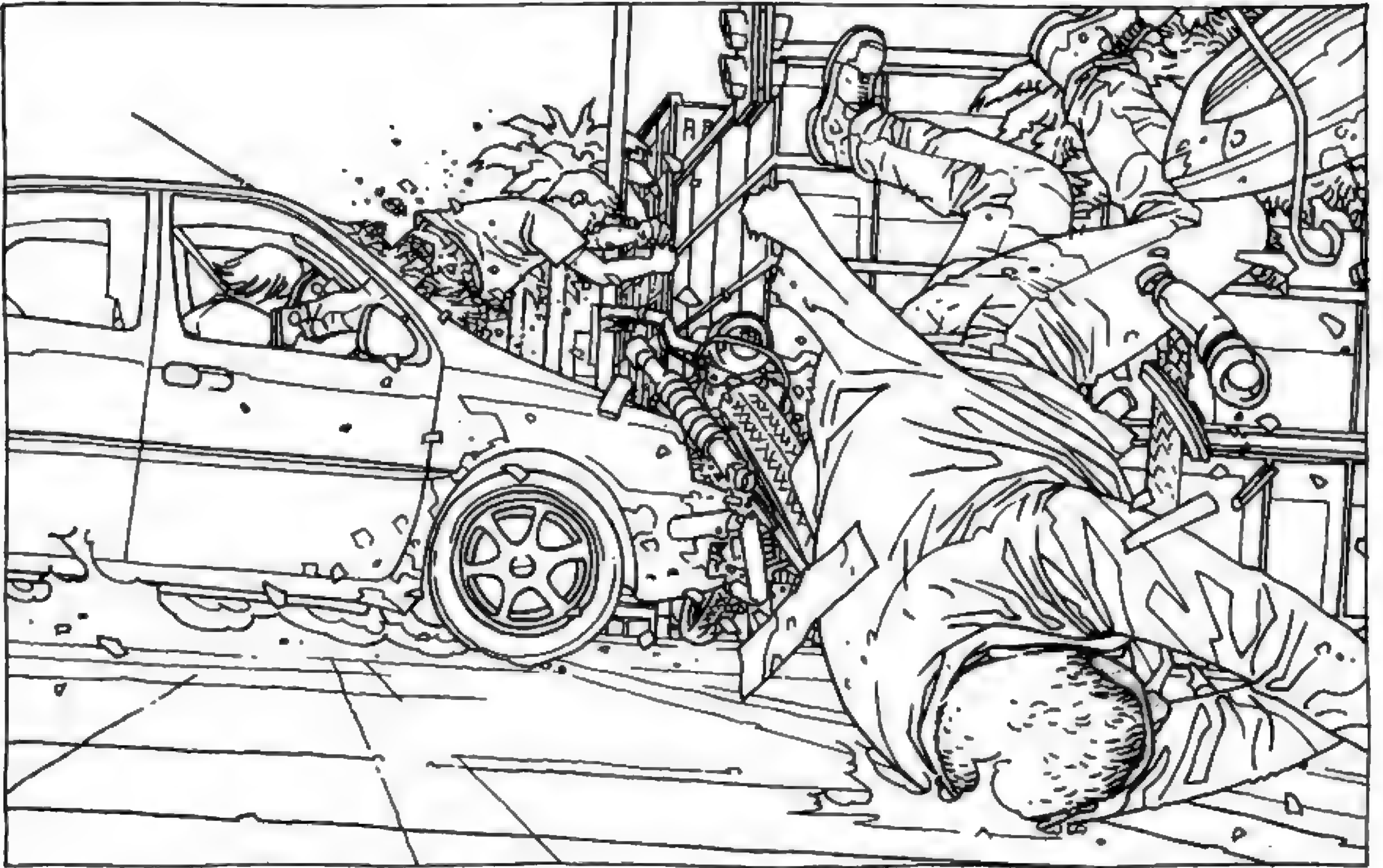
ROCK BOTTOM is an epic of human proportions.

Coming this September from

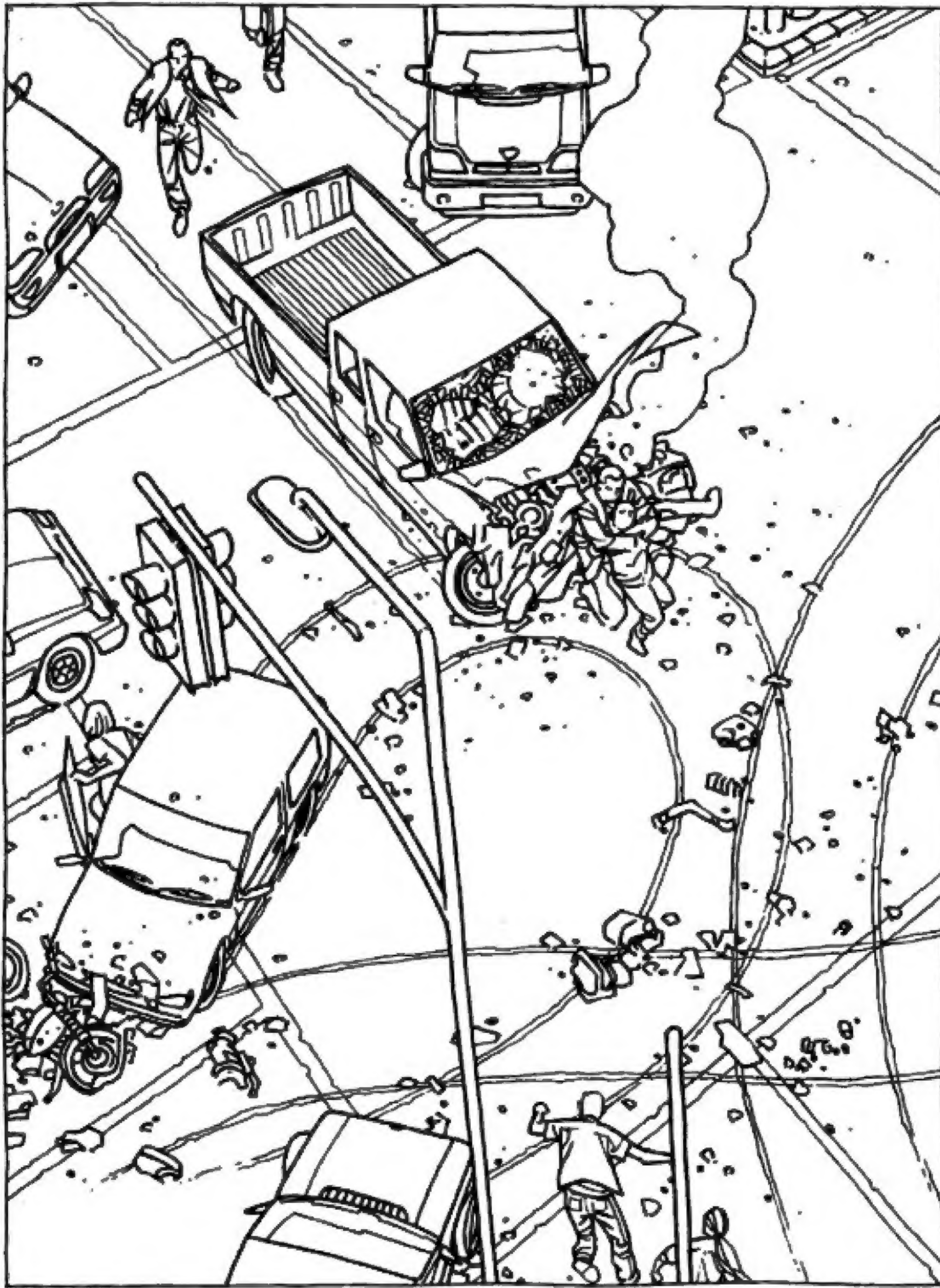
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MAKING COMICS BETTER



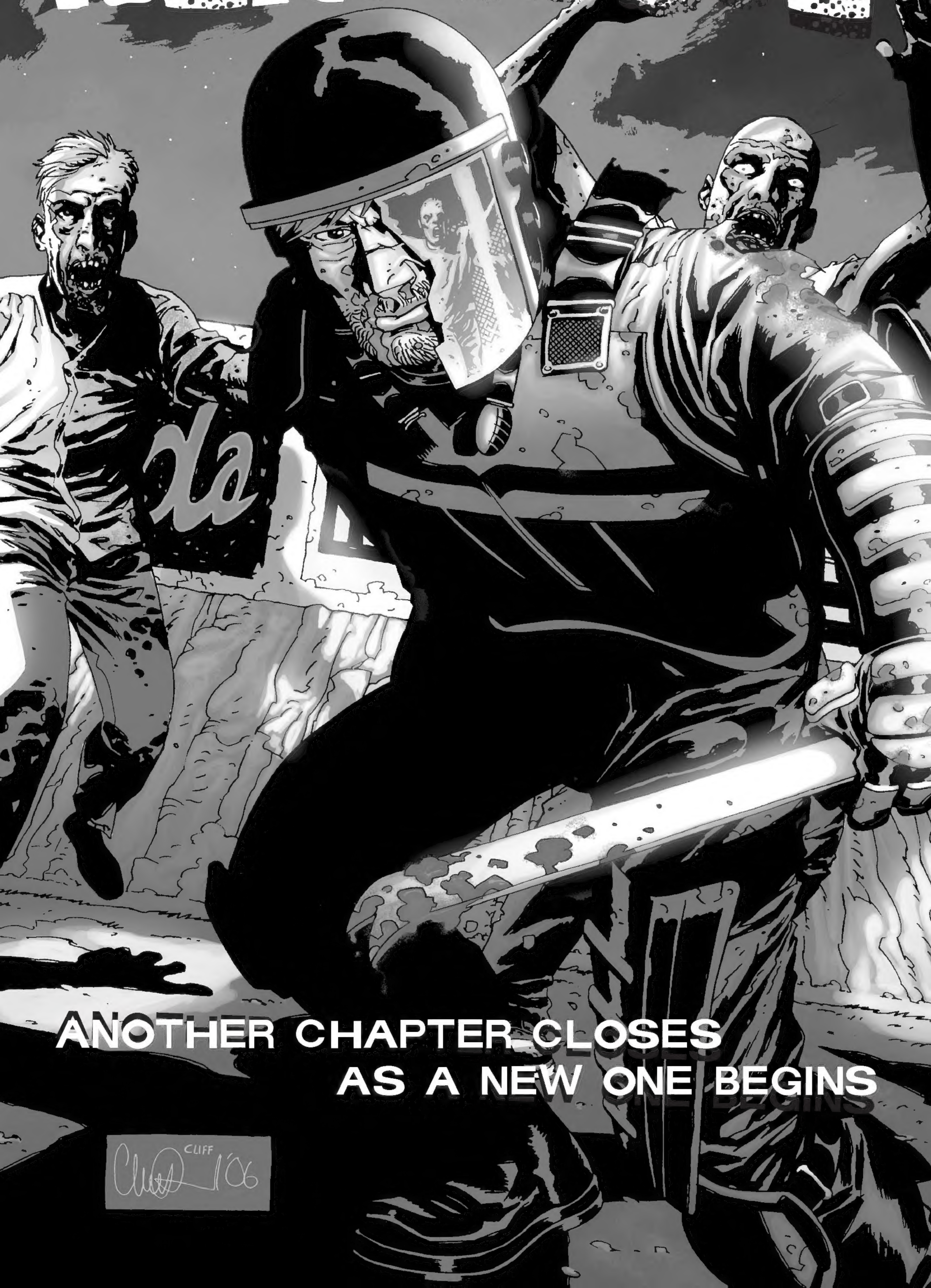








NEXT ISSUE



ANOTHER CHAPTER CLOSES
AS A NEW ONE BEGINS

CLIFF
Cliff 106



EMPIRE